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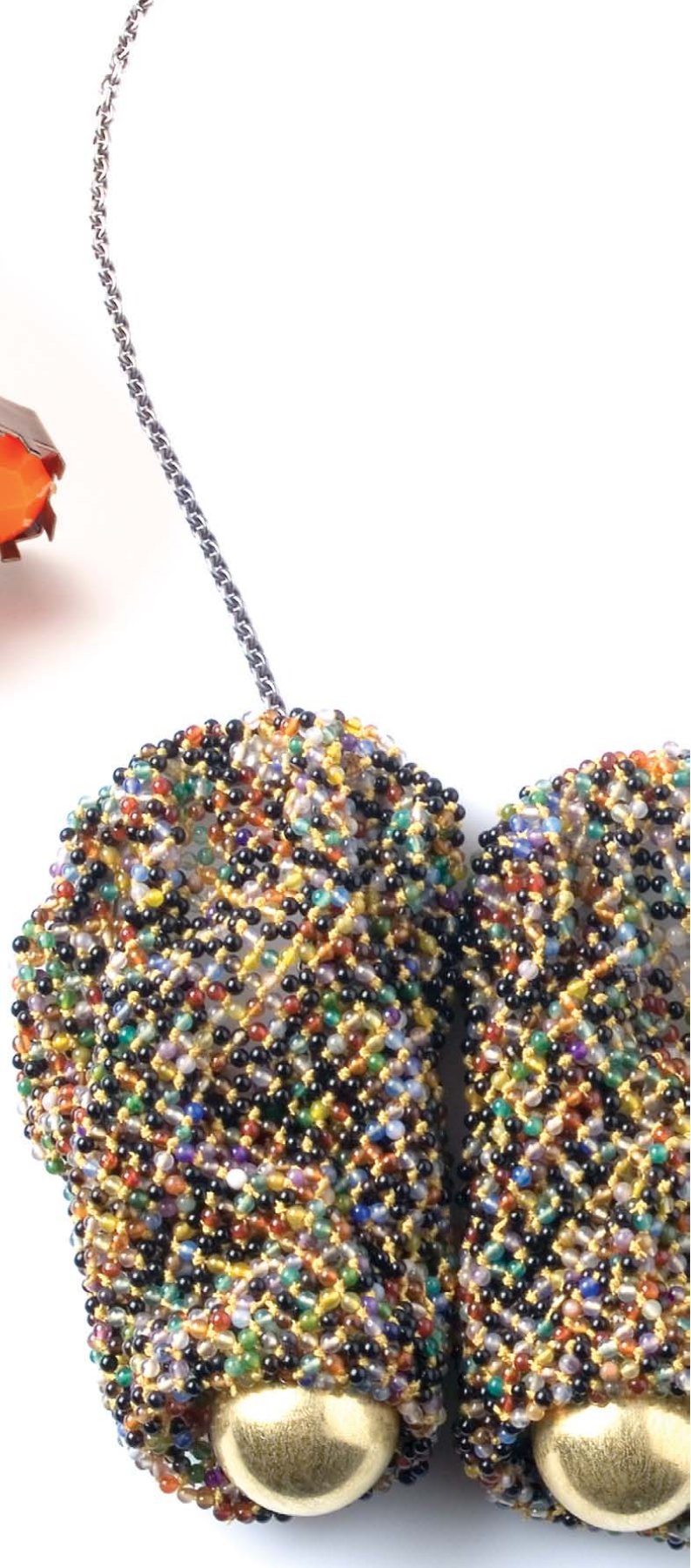

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(see Feature, p. 34)

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VENN DIAGRAMS, which originated within nineteenth-century mathematical logic, have now become common devices for educational and organizational use. These visual organizers consist of overlapping circles that display sets of similarities and differences between subjects. If one drew a Venn diagram of the articles in this issue, the intersecting spheres would create a large shared set representing the category of "Mexico."

The story of featured artist Antonio Pineda is synonymous with that of Mexican Modernism and the "Silver Renaissance" in Taxco during the 1930s and '40s. In this post-revolutionary era a vital art movement was born from the rediscovered roots of an indigenous past. There was an international vogue for all things Mexican, and the country became a source of political and cultural hope. As author MaLin Wilson-Powell writes: "During the 1930s Americans looked up from the Dust Bowl and soup lines to admire Mexico's success in building an authentically national mode of art out of the turmoil of their revolution."

Contemporary jeweler Kiff Slemmons also taps pre-Columbian traditions with her collaborative venture at the Taller Arte Papel Vista Hermosa, in Oaxaca. Working closely with community members at this handmade paper studio, she has developed a creative rapport built on equality, respect, and cultural pride. This symbiotic model has resulted in bold and desirable paper jewelry, and a local craft practice that is finding traction in the global market.

It was a fateful trip to Mexico that set "Studio" subject James Reynolds on his fruitful path in metals. While at the Bellas Artes School in San Miguel de Allende he took a tinsmithing class and discovered the artistic potential of this traditional Mexican craft. Reynolds has since enlisted this form of "three-dimensional drawing in metal" for several public commissions and in a range of evocative personal work.

Mexico also inspired the latest series by jewelers Lisa and Scott Cylinder. Their "Transpositions" collection, comprised of discarded musical instrument parts, was influenced by the Cylinder's love of Mexican jewelry, and motifs from pre-and post-Columbian culture.

Today, despite its rich artistic heritage, impressions of Mexico are often colored by news of drug violence and financial woe. Indeed Mexico, like metalsmithing, can assume varied associations based on one's geography and history. And any schematic diagram can only chart the shifting circles that intersect at a given place and time….

SUZANNE RAMLJAK
EDITOR

The mission of *Metalsmith* magazine is to document, analyze, and promote excellence in art, design, jewelry and metalsmithing. In fulfillment of the goal of producing a significant document of the field, editorial content will emphasize contemporary activities and ideas, with supportive content to include relevant historical work and critical issues.

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EDITOR Suzanne Ramljak
editor@snagmetalsmith.org
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Kate Fogarty
GRAPHIC DESIGN Luke Hayman, Rami Moghadam, Pentagram
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EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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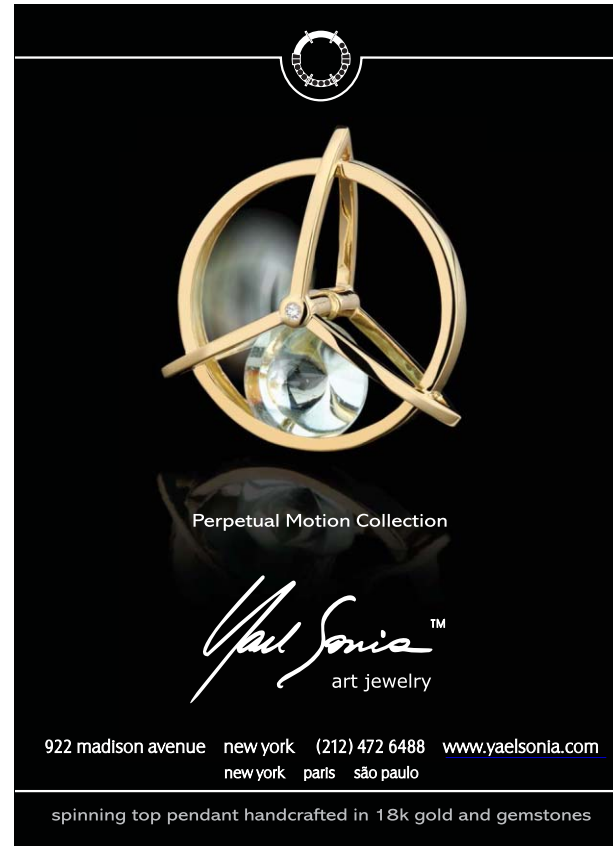
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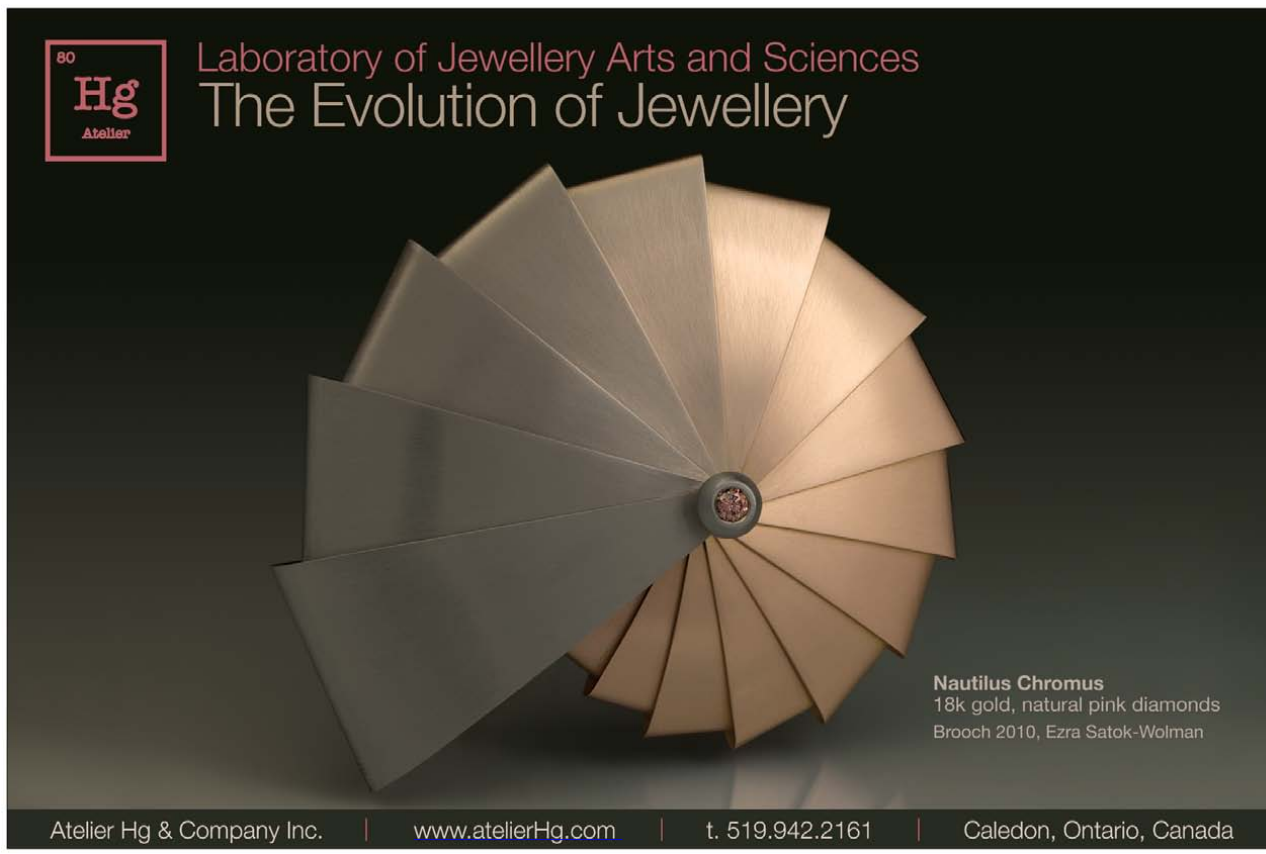
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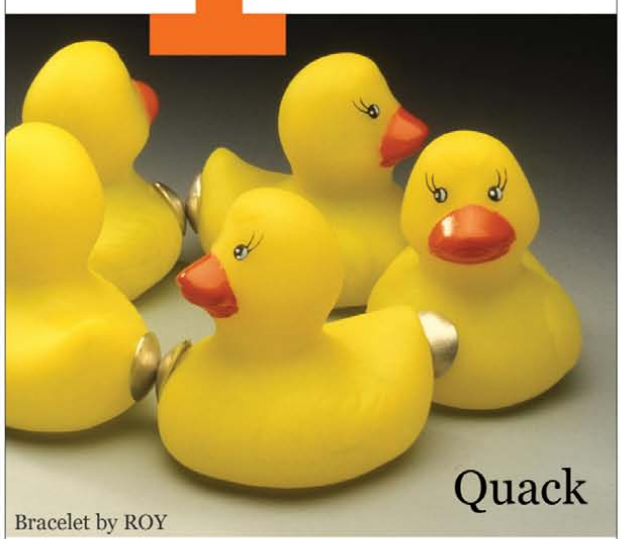

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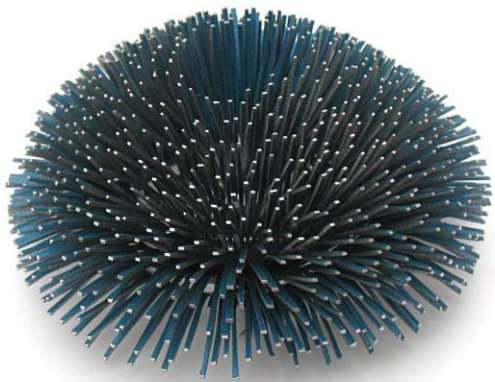

Top: Mirjam Hiller, brooch lusema, stainless steel, powdercoated
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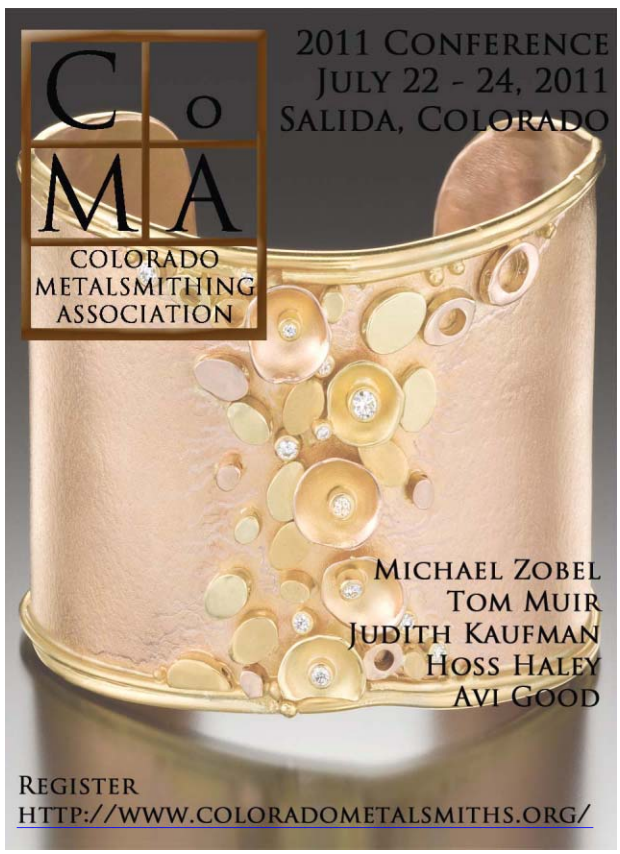

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Private Passion:
Artists' Jewelry of the 20th Century

YVÒNNE G.J.M. JORIS, MARJOLEINE DE VOS, WILLEM VAN TOORN, ROSITA STEENBEEK, CORNEL BIERENS, NICOLAAS MAATSIER, HANS DEN, HARTOG JAGER
STEDELIJK MUSEUM 'S-HERTOGENBOSCH AND ARNOLDSCHE ART PUBLISHERS, STUTTGART, 2009
BY TONI GREENBAUM

MOST ART ENTHUSIASTS are probably familiar with the mobile-like necklaces, bracelets, and earrings of Alexander Calder or Salvador Dalí's signature melting watch brooch *(The Persistence of Memory)* but are otherwise unaware of the substantial number of modern painters and sculptors who experimented with jewelry. In 1963, Graham Hughes, jewelry authority and Director of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths in London, wrote a pioneering book, *Modern Jewelry,* in which he surveyed pieces by an international roster of fine artists within the context of twentieth-century master jewelers. In 1967 the Museum of Modern Art mounted the exhibition "Jewelry by Contemporary Painters and Sculptors" Finch College Museum of Art in New York had organized a similar exhibition, "Art in Jewelry," in 1966. Both institutions published attractive catalogues. By the 1970s, jewelry by fine artists had become somewhat of a relatively obscure phenomenon.

Postwar Italian artists embraced the art of jewelry with fervor. This eagerness was due in part to the enthusiasm of sculptors Arnoldo and Giò Pomodoro, who made remarkably dramatic jewelry themselves; Roman jeweler Mario Masenza, whose firm produced striking designs by such artists as Afro Basaldella and Pietro Consagra; and jeweler-entrepreneur Giancarlo Montebello, whose Milan-based atelier, GEM Montebello, commissioned numerous painters and sculptors to develop pieces for fabrication by his artisans. Some of this jewelry, particularly that by painters Lucio Fontana and Alberto Burri and the Pomodoro brothers, became a prominent inclusion in the encyclopedic exhibition and accompanying tome, "The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943–1968," organized by New York's Guggenheim Museum in 1994. Among other important institutions, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston has many notable examples of jewelry by fine artists, thanks to Daphne Farago's stellar gift, as do the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal. Much to its credit, Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch boasts one of the best.

Private Passion: Artists' Jewelry of the 20th Century documents this superb collection in a most intriguing and entertaining manner. Instead of the usual historical or critical analysis, each of the six splendid essays that form the gist of the book was viscerally inspired by a piece or artist in the collection. The result is refreshingly romantic and more laudatory than pedantic, stimulating the reader to embrace jewelry by artists as a profound as well as personal aesthetic experience. In her enlightening forward, Yvònne G.J.M. Joris, the museum's director, states "…[T]his collection of artists' jewelry offers a modest yet fascinating *histoire des mentalités,* reflecting the great art-historical movements of the 20th century. It's precisely this aspect that makes it interesting for a museum to collect such objects…. Art has the power to fire the imagination…substantially intensified in the case of jewelry as intimate art object."

In his essay "Girl from 1961," author Willem van Toorn references a 1961 photograph by Ed van der Elsken depicting a young child standing amidst Calder mobiles. It's a fable, really, as van Toorn projects this beguiling three-year-old girl forward in time to her presumed maturity as a sensitive and alluring woman adorned with Calder brooches, pendants, bracelets, and necklaces. "She knows nothing of all this yet," he writes, "but she's already gazing at a future full of beauty."

Rosita Steenbeek chooses the frustrating but ultimately rewarding archeological digs undertaken to fish ancient coins out of Rome's muddy Tiber as the milieu for a fabricated love story about a classically inspired gold pendant by André Derain. The author relates that although there were 124 emperors' heads portrayed on Roman coins, only seven empresses shared the honor. Derain's wife, for whom the pendant was a gift, is designated by Steenbeek as "The Eighth Empress," also the enigmatic title of her essay.

Instead of the usual historical or critical analysis, each of the six splendid essays that form the gist of the book was viscerally inspired by a piece or artist in the collection.

In one of the most speculative contributions, "Caging Beauty," Cornel Bierens discusses three seemingly disparate jewels: Yves Klein's 1960 *Petite Vénus bleue*, a headless yet voluptuous figure painted in International Klein Blue that has been imprisoned in a cube-shaped pendant of acrylic and bronze foil; Man Ray's 1937 *Tête de Vénus*, an ironbound bronze head, likewise formatted to wear on a necklace; and Meret Oppenheim's untitled pavé diamond, with white and yellow gold "cogwheel" ring from 1985. The author contends that both Klein and Man Ray used their pieces, derived from classical mythology, to demonstrate the cruelty of beauty (and, perhaps, women), which they infer must be encased by art to contain it. Bierens casts the Oppenheim piece, a nod at Man Ray's 1920 photograph of a cogwheel, *Dancer (Danger),* in a more hopeful guise, likening the ring's three cogwheels to a "restored machine." The author aptly notes that Oppenheim had been one of Man Ray's "muses," adding zest to his already lusty conjectures. "Beauty lives again," asserts Bierens. "[Although] [d]angerous with all those teeth [*sic.* the cogwheels'], [it is] exactly as it should be. Because it is to beauty's teeth that artists owe their fire."

The most illuminating account in *Private Passion* is "Meret Oppenheim: A Score for a Jewel" by Nicolaas Matsier, who sheds light on the influence of this notorious Surrealist's jewelry on the rest of her her oeuvre. Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch is fortunate to have not only actual jewels designed by Oppenheim (although mostly fabricated in 1985, after her death, and, more recently, in 2003), but a substantial collection of her original sketches from as early as 1935. An undated but later notation next to one of the drawings reads: "This bracelet gave me the idea for fur-cup, saucer and spoon!" As a matter of fact, Maatsier alleges that it was a comment by Picasso that led to this iconic sculpture by Oppenheim, when, after viewing a sketch for a fur-covered bracelet, he told her she could "cover anything in fur."

Private Passion is exquisitely illustrated, with each jewel fairly jumping off its own page. One of the marvels of the collection at Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch is the considerable number of examples by many of the artists represented. It is indeed a treat to view familiar pieces, such as those by Arman, Jean Arp, Max Ernst, and Jean Cocteau, but it's the lesser known jewels by seasoned sculptors César and Louise Bourgeois, current artists Anish Kapoor and Jenny Holzer, and, particularly, those by Oppenheim that crown this astounding array. For those familiar with jewelry by painters and sculptors, *Private Passion* provides new information and insight; for the neophyte, it's a revelation and prompts further investigation. Arnoldsche has garnered a well-deserved reputation for ambitious publications on topics in contemporary jewelry. *Private Passion: Artists' Jewelry of the 20th Century* is surely one of the most engaging.

Toni Greenbaum, an art historian specializing in twentieth- and twenty-first-century jewelry and metalwork, is author of Messengers of Modernism: American Studio Jewelry, 1940–1960.

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James Reynolds

BY MARTINA WINDELS

"IT CHANGED MY LIFE," says James Reynolds of his move to a spacious studio located in an industrial mill building in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, three years ago. "I love the separation of home and studio," he says. "I needed to get away from work, get some distance." Echoing a problem familiar to anybody who has worked from home—work never stops—"I am a lot more focused," he says of the new studio. "And I don't have a computer here."

Drapery Study, 2007
copper
66 x 29"
PHOTO: KAREN PHILIPPI

Just north of Providence, Pawtucket is home to Slater Mill, the oldest industrial mill in the United States and the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. A working-class town, Pawtucket today is still dominated by smokestacks and old brick and stone mills built near the Blackstone River, whose water was diverted to power the looms of the textile mills. Many of them were later converted into costume jewelry factories before both industries moved first south and then overseas.

The city is experiencing a quiet revival, which is a result in part of its welcoming attitude towards artists and artistic venues. It has hosted the month-long Pawtucket Arts Festival every September, offering music, theater, and exhibitions for several years now. And while a handful of the many mills have been converted to lofts and condominiums, there is plenty of raw space available at reasonable prices, something that is harder to come by in Providence these days.

JAMES REYNOLDS
Restocking the Ark, 2010
tin-plated steel,
enamel paint, frame
30 x 36"
PHOTO: KAREN PHILIPPI

Reynolds's studio is located on the top floor of the long three-story red brick mill, which houses several artist studios; a couple of glassblowers and several sculptors occupy the other spaces. Nearby is the Pawtucket Armory, which is slated to become the new home of the Gamm, a small award-winning local theater.

An eight-foot-long industrial brake dominates Reynold's spacious studio, with its high ceilings and columns running down the middle of the space. Burn marks, stains, and paint splatters cover the aged hardwood floor, "evidence of the work that has gone on here before," says Reynolds. The 1,000-plus-pound equipment was purchased from an industrial machine surplus seller. Like much heavy machinery from Pawtucket's heyday, it was abandoned "after a good workout over the years." But it has a new lease on life here in Reynolds's studio, where he uses it mostly to hem his metal "drawings," putting on a finished edge to strengthen and stiffen the pieces.

Reynolds has worked with sheet metal for more than 20 years. After graduating from the sculpture department at the Rhode Island School of Design, Reynolds traveled to San Miguel de Allende in Mexico to study ceramics at the Bellas Artes School. When he arrived, the class was full, so he enrolled in a tinsmithing class instead—and instantly realized its potential to create his artwork, because, he explains, "it is like three-dimensional drawing in metal."

A traditional craft still commonly found in Mexico, tinsmithing uses the technique of repoussé to "draw" images in tinplated steel or copper sheet. With the help of tools, a piece of sheet metal gets shaped alternately from the front and the back to create a three-dimensional impression of an image. Often paint or gold leaf is applied after the metal is shaped to highlight certain elements of the design. The technique, which has a long history in Mexico's rich tradition of crafts and handmade objects, appealed to Reynolds because it enabled him to combine drawing, sculpture, and painting.

Since that fateful trip to Mexico, Reynolds has completed numerous architectural commissions employing tinsmithing. His work adorns private residences as well as commercial spaces, the copper panels for the Loeb Boathouse in New York's Central Park, completed in 2007, among them. He splits his time between working on commissions for designers and architects and the "work I do for myself, work that I create in response to my experience of the world around me," he says.

Images and objects depicted in Mexican folk art are literal and figurative, showing animals or everyday objects to tell a story or carry a spiritual message. Reynolds also uses the technique to convey meaning and tell stories, but as he explains, "I always start with a sense of narrative, but I don't want to control the story too much." In that

The artist James Reynolds with torch in his Pawtucket, Rhode Island, studio. PHOTO: KAREN PHILIPPI

way he leaves the viewer much room for interpretation of his, at times, ominous and dark works.

The images, often combining repoussé to create a three-dimensional relief and black grease pencil lines on tinplate, conjure modern-day allegorical tales. Employing realistic depictions of snakes, birds, flowers, and butterflies in combination with megaphones, guns, and radio towers, Reynolds sets a somber stage for his views of today's world. He employs color sparsely and effectively to bring some of these elements to the forefront with a strong fire engine red or a deep blue. Accents of gold leaf simultaneously speak of ornamentation and doom. An impeccable craftsman, Reynolds has succeeded in transforming a folk art technique into fine art.

Looking out of one of the large windows running along the eastern studio wall, Reynolds says: "It's great to be on the top floor. There is nobody above me, so when it rains, I hear it pounding on the roof. I love the storms coming through and the lightning, it's amazing…there are lots of lightning storms in Pawtucket."

Lightning storms have made it into his studio, too: inside, on the wall facing the windows, a lightning bolt several feet long, fashioned from gold-leafed copper, "strikes" between two of his earlier "Drapery Studies", three-dimensional depictions of classic Greek robes repousséed in intricate detail.

A recurring theme, the lightning bolt plays also a central role in the triptych *Three Views of Time,* 2007. Running through faintly drawn tableaux of megaphones trying to get out their message, water glasses ready to be spilled, and bright red roses clamoring for attention, a raised gold-plated bolt dominates each of the three panels, striking and illuminating the scene simultaneously. "I guess you draw inspiration from what's around you," concludes Reynolds.

Martina Windels is a jeweler, former gallery owner, and writer based in Rhode Island.

Furthermore:
www.jamesreynoldsmetalwork.com

Deb Karash
Accidental Jeweler

BY ANDREA DINOTO

EIGHT YEARS AGO, studio jeweler Deb Karash took the leap—into wholesale. She had been selling to galleries and at retail art fairs full-time since 1995, when she decided to bring her signature pencil-on-metal jewelry into the production arena. A wholesale approach to production implies both higher sales volume and more profit, but the tradeoff is more demanding recordkeeping, bookkeeping, invoicing, and other—for an artist—distracting and time-consuming responsibilities. Karash first tested the wholesale waters at the Buyer's Market of American Craft Show in Philadelphia, which went well, as did the ACC show in Baltimore that same year. Karash succeeded in writing orders for up to $26,000 in sales and has continued on the wholesale track, which now represents about 80 percent of her income. At the same time, Karash continues to work with dozens of retail galleries around the country and to teach at craft schools—notably Penland, Arrowmont, and Mendocino Arts Center—as a workshop instructor. She has also helped establish a crafts co-op, Flow, in her recently adopted hometown of Marshall, North Carolina, where a gathering of artists is turning a one-time industrial hub into a thriving creative community.

Karash, 55, grew up in Illinois, where she attended community college thinking she'd become a home economics teacher. But that idea was quickly scrapped in favor of art classes, including fiber and clay, and a career move into retail fashion display. While continuing to work in display, Karash decided to return to school. She enrolled in Northern Illinois University at DeKalb, where at age 30 she received her B.A. and a few years later an M.A. in jewelry and metalsmithing. "I had the degree and thought it would be a hobby," she says, but as she started to do a few craft shows jewelry began to assume greater importance in her life. At the same time, she says, the display world was changing—"It was all just signage, not that creative anymore"—and though at 40 she was "scared to do a career change," she did, and began successfully to produce jewelry full time.

Karash works with mixed metals—sterling, copper, and brass—treated to give surfaces "tooth," so her makings with soft Prismacolor pencils will adhere. She also incorporates stones like turquoise and agate (and soon, diamonds) into her "intensively handmade," nature-inspired work for a layered effect, and credits her early experience in fashion display with having helped develop her color sense. Whether fabricating production or retail pieces, Karash makes all the work herself. Only a very few components are cast, like the stem of a flower, for example, and a few earrings are die cut. She hires part-time help only for "the hard part," i.e., the dreaded paperwork. "I only spend half my time doing creative work," she says.

Wholesale differs from retail, "in that instead of making what you want on any given day, you have a commitment to a gallery, and it's very important to deliver when you say," Karash states. "You have to have a plan and know how much work you can produce in a given time." Karash notes that some art schools are starting to teach business skills, and she is pleased as well that SNAG now includes talks on business practices in their conferences. "When I spoke at SNAG's Chicago conference four or five years ago," she recalls, "there were maybe 30 people in the room, and it was an extra event." But when she spoke more recently, 300 people showed up for her Powerpoint presentation on doing craft shows: how to apply; the importance of having good jury images; planning your booth; security issues;

Deb Karash with her works at the artist's collective, named Flow, in downtown Marshall, North Carolina, 2010.
PHOTO: ROB AMBERG

Black Stripe Branch (pin/pendant), 2010
sterling silver, copper, brass, Prismacolor pencil
4 x 2 ½ x ½"
PHOTO: LARRY SANDERS

Pink Daisy (pin/pendant), 2010
sterling silver, copper, brass, Prismacolor pencil
2 ½ x 2 ½ x ½"
PHOTO: LARRY SANDERS

Marty's Brooch, 2010
sterling silver, copper, brass, Prismacolor pencil
2 ½ x 2 ½ x ½"
PHOTO: LARRY SANDERS

Red Dot Flower, 2008
sterling silver, copper, brass, Prismacolor pencil
6 x 2 ¼ x ½"
PHOTO: LARRY SANDERS

Seattle, Washington

BY MATTHEW KANGAS

ALTHOUGH BETTER KNOWN as an international locus of glass art, the Pacific Northwest also has an illustrious history of metalsmithing, from jewelry, forging, and blacksmithing, to the current lively scene that combines all three. One glaring omission separates Northwest metals artists from glass artists, however: there is little if any art-critical endorsement by major (or minor) local or nationally published media outlets. With only one main fine arts establishment, Tacoma Art Museum, actually forming a significant collection of metals (chiefly jewelry), institutional imprimatur is also lacking.

Meanwhile, it is worth examining the scene, one that includes artists, dealers, studios and teaching facilities, museums, curators, and dedicated art critics who explore the parallel worlds of jewelry art, raucous metal-fabricated sculpture, and genteel architectural decoration. Taken altogether, these factors create a synergy of great activity and promise.

How did it all begin? As recent research and exhibitions have underscored, Albert Berry of Juneau, Alaska and, later, Seattle; Julia and Caroline Hoffman of Portland; and Ruth Pennington at Seattle's University of Washington School of Art dominated the first half of the twentieth century. After World War II, foundry-based sculpture programs and jewelry-making departments took off with the help of the GI Bill, both at UW and at Central Washington University in Ellensburg.

Out of these crucibles arose major figures who came to be associated with the "Ellensburg Funky" style, including Ramona Solberg, Ken Cory, and Ron Ho. Many of their students, including Nancy Worden, Merrily Tompkins, Donald Tompkins, and others expanded metals by combining it with found ethnic objects and adding socially critical and humorous subject matter during the lively (and often off-color) 1960s.

As the area's population started to rise, artists as well as graduate students were attracted to the region from all parts of North America and abroad. Their presence, including transplants from Iraq, Israel, Canada, and Asia, obliterated the dominating, found-object regional style of "Ellensburg Funky" or, better put, occasionally incorporated found objects into jewelry art, but also restored traditional fabrication approaches such as casting, welding, and forging.

Significant Seattle jewelry artists today include Worden and Ho, Mary Lee Hu, Catherine Grisez, Virginia Causey, Gina Pankowski, Jana Brevick, and Andy Cooperman, most of whom show in fine art galleries or at high-end craft outlets like the widely known Facèré Jewelry Art Gallery, which celebrates its thirty-ninth anniversary this year.

Foundry- and smithy-based artists who have attained national recognition through gallery and museum shows or public art and private commissions include Robert Maki, who has executed more than 20 geometrically arranged, temporary and permanently sited pieces of thin-gauge steel-plate sculptures in the region and across America. Bernard Hosey's curved welded iron and steel abstract sculptures are widely appreciated, as are Portland artist Lee Kelly's, which were the subject of a 2010 Portland Art Museum retrospective. Ries Niemi, self-described "industrial artist," has made metal furniture and designed and fabricated more than 20 public art projects in the U.S.

Working more modestly and concentrating mostly on private

Interior of Facèré Jewelry Art Gallery in Seattle

Display of jewelry and metal work at Souvenir Gallery, in Seattle's historic Ballard district

architectural commissions are artists like Joseph McDonnell, David Lisch, Lisa Geertsen, and Andy Blakney, among others. At least a dozen individual or shared work sites have sprung up over the past decade, many of which were commissioned by architects designing homes for Microsoft millionaires and the occasional billionaire. Much of this activity tanked during the current economic downturn. Phillip Baldwin, chiefly a knife and blade-maker, has also had extensive private patronage including in Japan.

Besides Facèré and William Traver Gallery, Pacini Lubell and Stonington galleries in Pioneer Square (center of the Seattle art scene, with more than 20 galleries) and Lucia Douglas Gallery in nearby Bellingham display jewelry as fine art—with corresponding price points (Worden's *Frozen Dreams* necklace sold for $15,000 at Traver last year). Besides the fine arts galleries are a healthy number of craft-only galleries and boutiques of varying quality, the best being Twist; Fancy at the Moore Hotel; and Souvenir, impresario Curtis Steiner's gallery in Seattle's first national historic landmark district, Ballard. Steiner combines a select inventory of antique jewelry with contemporary group and solo shows.

Taken altogether, these factors create a synergy of great activity and promise.

Where is all this art made? Along with the blacksmith and foundry collaboratives noted above, metals artists, like glass artists, inhabit a well balanced mixture of private studios, shares, and publicly available rental spaces that also offer courses as well as teaching jobs for MFA graduates and others who combine teaching with production work, unique pieces, and private commissions.

The upper-floor corner space of 1426 S. Jackson Street Studios, a visual arts building, houses veteran Micki Lippe and four other artists. Current chair of the Seattle Metals Guild fundraising committee and innovator of the Guild's Women's Shelter Jewelry Project, Lippe is also a former board member and president of SNAG and has exhibited widely. After living in Germany a few years ago, Lippe's jewelry took a looser, less polished, turn.

Jennifer Howard Kicinski shares space

with Lippe, along with Israeli-born Iris Guy. Kicinski, from Texas originally, has had solo and group shows at Souvenir, Traver, and Ancient Grounds in Seattle. She concentrates on polyhedron pendants and brooches of mica, sterling silver, and gold. Guy is a graduate of Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem and sells her oxidized silver wire and felt necklaces at the new Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, as well as other museum shops.

Pratt Fine Arts Center, a City of Seattle–owned facility with a private, nonprofit fundraising board of trustees, was founded in 1976 and named after Edwin T. Pratt, a prominent local civil rights activist who was assassinated by unknown killers. A number of the metals instructors were included in the recent "Forged From Fire" exhibition at the center's downtown exhibition venue, Pratt Gallery at Tashiro-Kaplan Building, in Pioneer Square.

With the reorganization of the UW School of Art, every material from clay to copper and every technique from casting to firing and glassblowing are now within the sculpture program. Upon the retirement of Solberg, nationally prominent jeweler Mary Lee Hu was hired as a replacement. After Hu's retirement, however, the jewelry program was sadly axed.

NANCY WORDEN
Frozen Dreams, 2004
silver, nickel, nickel-plated copper, carved acrylic
front: 17 x 14 x 2 ¼"
PHOTO: DOUG YAPLE
COLLECTION OF TACOMA ART MUSEUM, TACOMA, WASHINGTON

JENNIFER HOWARD KICINSKI
15 Heptagons (brooch), 2006
sterling, mica, nickel
2 ½ x 2 ½ x ½"

While Seattle Art Museum has historic jewelry of Africa, Asia, and Europe on view in some of its new galleries on First Avenue near Pike Place Market (also a landmark district), Tacoma Art Museum and Bellevue Arts Museum are the go-to institutions for exciting developments in metals. Respective curators Rock Hushka and Italian transplant Stefano Catalani are committed to showing jewelry art. At the former is a core collection of Northwest jewelry that began with a substantial donation of works by the late Ken Cory. A dedicated display case is always full of selections from the permanent collection. In Bellevue (the state's wealthiest city per capita) across Lake Washington, BAM is housed in a Steven Holl–designed building that recently underwent an $800,000 makeover and identity change to focus on crafts and design. Last year, Catalani began "Indulge," an annual two-day event of 30 juried "leading jewelers," which drew more than 800 enthusiastic jewelry lovers to BAM. The museum has also hosted national touring exhibitions by metals artists such as Lisa Gralnick and Bruce Metcalf. Without a permanent collection, though, BAM remains more a *Kunsthalle* than a true collecting museum.

Metals artists, like glass artists, inhabit a well balanced mixture of private studios, shares, and publicly available rental spaces that also offer courses.

As to the art critics, the demise of the print version of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* (one of two dailies) removed veteran art critic Regina Hackett's thoughts on jewelry art from mainstream accessibility. She reinvented herself as a nationally recognized art blogger at artsjournal.com. Her erstwhile colleague at the *P-I*, Judy Wagonfeld, has written for *Metalsmith* and *Ornament*, as has former *Seattle Times* art critic Robin Updike. With such a vibrant scene, sympathetic art critics are indeed stymied, however much they may wish to engage provocative contemporary jewelry artists and others beyond specialist publications.

Glass artists, coming late to the art world, quickly formed allegiances with fine arts galleries in Seattle and beyond, soon followed by the interest, approbation and disapprobation of real art critics. When Pacific Northwest metals artists fully come of age, the same thing may happen. Until then, an engaging, growing scene remains relatively unknown to an international audience.

Matthew Kangas, a Seattle-based author, has published four anthologies of his writing, most recently Return to the Viewer: Selected Art Reviews *(Midmarch Arts Press).*

Artists and students working in the metal studio at Pratt Fine Arts Center
PHOTO: JONATHAN STEINBERG

RIES NIEMI
Guns, installation at Lucia Douglas Gallery, 2005
steel, forged and machined
life-size

Furthermore:
www.facerejewelryart.com
www.curtissteiner.com
www.pratt.org
www.tacomaartmuseum.org
www.bellevuearts.org

Alan Revere
Setting Standards

AS A MAKER WHO LOVES JEWELRY, I am attracted by good design and fine craftsmanship. After spending a lifetime looking at jewelry, I have naturally established certain standards for appreciating different types of work. For example, I have a lower standard for everyday costume jewelry one might find in a clothing boutique, and a higher standard for handmade items. I also have a criterion for each different category of ornament. But the highest shelf is reserved for jewelry, which, stated simply, takes my breath away.

In selecting items for this column, I searched that shelf and came up with eight pieces of fine jewelry that knock my socks off. These works are so cool that I look at them over and over, in awe of their impact. Each of them, for a different reason, causes a visceral response in me that starts at my eyes, runs through my arms and hands, and ends at my heart.

Klaus Ullrich's monumental experiments in fusing and sculpting hot gold drew me like a moth to his school in Pforzheim, Germany. Alishan's *Tierra Nova* ring is full of surprises, textures, and drama. *Fold Ring* by Christoph Krahenmann is a perfect design, combining grace and movement, along with large and small areas of focus. Diana Vincent's sensual *Key* brooch grabs my eye every time, and takes it on an elegant visual journey. Barbara Heinrich's explosive, implosive, soft and hard textural necklace is a fixture on my top shelf. The most recent work of George Sawyer has taken the technique of mokume gane to the edge and beyond. Mark Schneider's use of precious materials with a constructivist postmodern twist is my eye candy, while Niki Ulehla's enlistment of unorthodox materials and process in high style gives me hope for the next generation of jewelry designers.

Alan Revere is a German-trained master goldsmith, award-winning jewelry designer, author, and educator.

KLAUS ULLRICH
Brooch, 1970
18k gold, diamonds
approx. 2 x 2"

DIANA VINCENT
Key, 1998
sterling silver
3 ⅛ x 1 ⅛ x ⅜"
PHOTO: PAM PERUGI MARRACCINI

ALISHAN
Tierra Nova, 2005
18k gold, sterling silver (with patina), coral
2 ⅛ x 1 ½ x 1 ⅛"
PHOTO: BARRY BLAU

BARBARA HEINRICH
Sanctuary of Innocence (necklace),
2006
18k gold, pearls, rabbit fur
1 5/8 x 7/8 x 3/4"
PHOTO: BARRY BLAU

NIKI ULEHLA
Black Gilded Pantyhose Necklace, 2009
22k gold leaf on pantyhose, sterling silver, oxidized and 18k gold plated
diam. 2"
PHOTO: NIKI ULEHLA

CHRISTOPH KRAHENMANN
Fold Ring, 2003
sterling silver with patina on one side and diamonds
1 ¾ x 1 ¾ x ¾"
PHOTO: RON SALTIEL

GEORGE SAWYER
Ring, 2010
22k and 18k yellow gold, 14k red gold, 14k gray gold, black patinaed silver
diam. 1"
PHOTO: BARRY BLAU

MARK SCHNEIDER
Elite Emerald Ring, 2004
platinum, 18k yellow gold, emerald, yellow diamonds, white diamonds
height 1 ¼"
PHOTO: JOHN PARRISH

Kiff Slemmons: Sharing Paper and Culture in Oaxaca

BY TACEY A. ROSOLOWSKI

IN THE SUMMER OF 2009, jeweler Kiff Slemmons stood with five women artisans in the workshop of the Taller Arte Papel Vista Hermosa, an Oaxacan atelier devoted to making handmade paper. The sun warmed the wooden structure, and palm fronds bobbed outside in the breeze as the women scrutinized a neckpiece. Slemmons had been working with the group for nearly a decade. In anticipation of her annual visit, Evelina had hurried while gluing sheets of paper to fabricate a new neckpiece element. "Too much glue," she admitted. When Slemmons asked her, "Well, what can be done with it as it is?" Evelina took the piece and dumped it into a sinkful of water. When wet, the fibrous paper, fixed with gluey gobs, could be kneaded into new forms.

For Slemmons, this anecdote signifies not only the creative value of mistakes but also a complex backstory of collaboration and change. A decade earlier, when the atelier was founded, the town of San Agustin Etla, Mexico, had no craft tradition. (A textile mill closed in the early '60s, leaving no local industry.) These women—and many of the men, who make the atelier's handmade paper—built a new culture of work, learning to attend to quality control and market, for example. It took several years for the women to confidently make their own creative suggestions and a full six years before they called themselves artisans. Slemmons facilitated these changes, and the process has changed her, too. Her recent exhibition at the Chicago Cultural Center, "Pride of Paper," includes more than 200 works based on her designs for the atelier. While showcasing the beauty of the handmade paper, with its amazing range of textures, colors, and sculptural forms, Slemmons designed "Pride of Paper" to highlight facets of the collaborative process. As the craft community knows from Slemmons's previous exhibitions, her notion of the "art work" goes beyond the limits of any individual piece. "Pride of Paper" celebrates a "work of art" that embraces objects, the process and context of work, and the many collaborators involved.

Media Luna, Corazón, Pico, Acordeón (12 bracelets), 2001–10
paper
dimensions variable

In 1999, painter and printmaker Francisco Toledo founded the Taller Arte Papel Vista Hermosa in order to revive the pre-Columbian tradition of making paper. (The European conquest eradicated the rich indigenous papermaking culture.) The men hired as papermakers followed tradition and began to derive the fibers from regional plants such as *majahua* and *chichicatzli* (fast-growing shrubs), *pochote* (similar to kapok), and *coyuche*, a type of cotton with a rich caramel color. Their dyes came from local materials as well: peppers, cochineal, and indigo. (They also use aniline dyes.) A slide show in the exhibition documents the process: men stir vats with colored slurries; paper sheets dry in the sun on racks outside the factory. The heavy sheets of paper in raw form are also on display: blazing red, green, and deep brown (the actual color of the fiber). From the beginning, the artisans added crushed mica and rough fibers for textural interest. During their first year, the workers made paper for artists and also produced blank books, with covers that Toledo had designed.

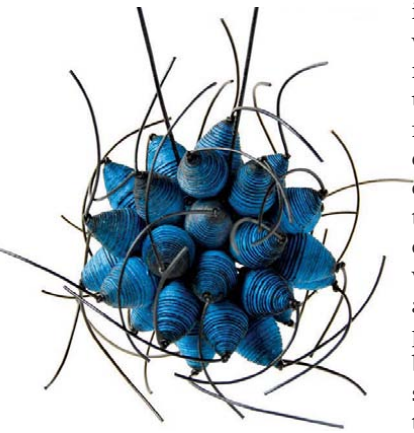
Then, in 2000, Toledo invited Slemmons to be an artist-in-residence and work with the atelier's paper. Toledo and Slemmons had come to know one another during Slemmons's vacation trips to Oaxaca. She was already familiar with the art scene, and Toledo noted how glad he would be if she happened to create designs that the atelier might reproduce to sell. Though delighted at the invitation, Slemmons was hesitant about production work, so alien to her art practice. Designing reproducible paper forms intrigued her, since it would be an entrée into a complex engagement with the cultural and aesthetic sensibilities of Mexican workers.

"Pride of Paper" includes a series of photos of Slemmons sitting with the jewelry artisans around the studio worktable. The women's assurance seems to grow with time. Each year Slemmons would present her designs and demonstrate how to mark

Kiff Slemmons and Arte Papel artisans, 2009. Left, clockwise from bottom: Evelina Marquez Morga, Carolina Morga Copar, Kiff Slemmons, Lucia Ruiz Torres, Heidy Enriques Lara, Maribel Chavez Gonzalez

and cut sheets of paper into shapes, then fold them to precise specifications or hand-roll them into beads. Slemmons's Spanish was rudimentary, but one of the workers spoke good English and Slemmons occasionally relied on an outside translator to get her ideas across. But most important was that they worked together at the worktable, all day and everyday, developing a combined verbal, gestural language that, as Slemmons says, "became more and more sophisticated and nuanced over many years." The women have become increasingly independent, confident, analytical of their own work, and willing to experiment. They construct massive forms by stringing hundreds of disks or folded paper shapes on leather or elastic. They create spare structures, hand-rolling long, slim beads. Slemmons has intentionally offered her designs with a very delicate hand; she has never wanted to impose her will or act as a "first world" expert, and so has encouraged

The women have become increasingly independent, confident, analytical of their own work, and willing to experiment.



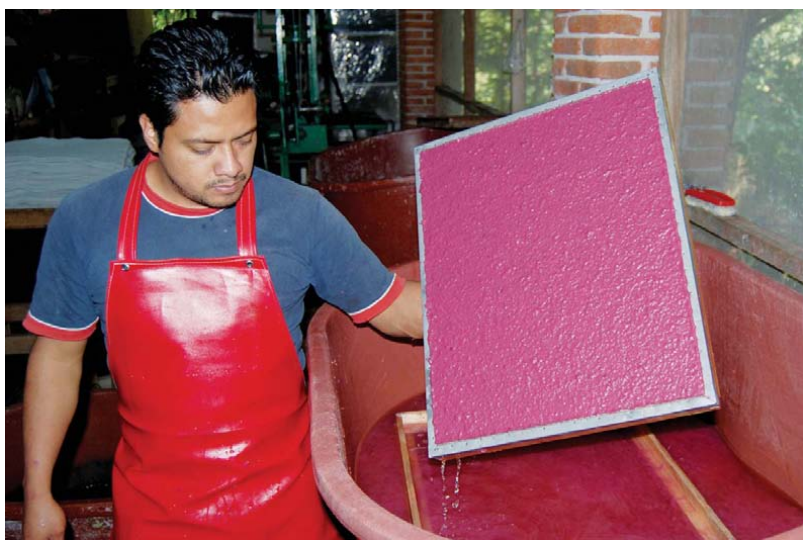
Ajo (necklace), 2010
paper
diam. 3 ½"

Eric Ramirez Castellanos, paper maker at Arte Papel Vista Hermosa, Oaxaca, Mexico

the jewelry artisans to think of the work as their own. The ritual in which they gather to name their work solidifies the relationship. The women decided on the title *Arana*, "spider," for a neckpiece with many extensions. *Gorditos* ("a little fat thing") is the title of one of the chunky beads. And after a discussion about economical uses of materials, artisan Heidy created the spiky *Gusano* to use up the paper corners left over from cutting disks (it's named after an acid-green and red caterpillar).

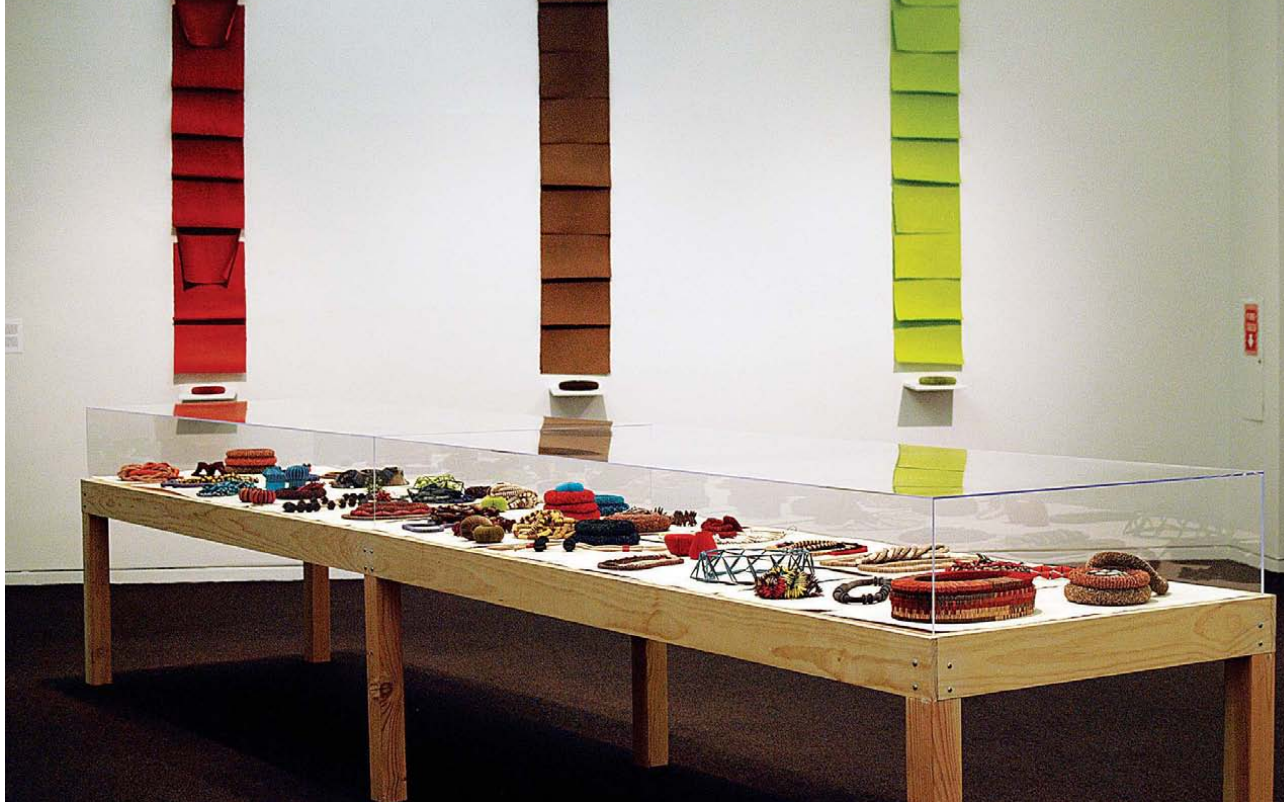
"Pride of Paper" is credited to Slemmons, but ownership is fluid. The work has been made with the atelier's paper, from individual elements developed and named with the jewelry artisans' input. They made many of the beads and other basic elements used in the exhibition, while Slemmons fabricated others. Some elements are part of the atelier's normal production work; others were designed for works unique to this exhibition. The photographs (printed on atelier paper) that replace standard wall labels show the papermakers at work and the jewelry artisans in all phases of production. Each sheet of paper, each bead, each finished bracelet results from shared effort, and Slemmons has loosened the boundaries of her artistic identity and invited others to share the space.

The exhibition is divided into two main sections, with the central displays set up on long wooden tables that evoke the artisans' worktable. *Feast* offers up the sensory abundance of Oaxaca, the constituent papers dyed to recall the hilly landscape surrounding the atelier. Groups of bulky bracelets and neckpieces form sculptural masses, the deep blues recalling a morning haze. Slemmons was inspired by local plants; she dried them and then asked Eric, one of the papermakers, to replicate the colors in dyes. A grouping of necklaces reflects the browns of winter wood, the lemon greens of shoots in spring. The forms' declivities and shadows add to the colors' complex personalities: the purple of *pochote* flowers, the earthy reds of Oaxacan brickwork. This display generates complex dialogues of form and color, mimicking how objects shimmer and vibrate in the Mexican sun.



In contrast, works in the section titled *Huesos* (bones) are rendered in stark white. Slemmons's concept for the exhibition began with these objects, the white referring to the atelier's blank books and the purging of color, revealing base structures. She explains that after they made some experimental forms, "we got them together and the women got excited .... Evelina said that each piece looked like it was a different color, even though they are made of the same paper." The structure alters the white, and Slemmons noted that they seemed like skeletons of the other pieces, asking if it would be strange to call them "bones." "Oh, no," they said, giving voice to the Mexican sensibility that death is the natural counterpart of life's sensual feast. *Huesos* also signifies abstraction, so these pieces refer freely to corals, rock formations, ladders, or buildings. A display of "blanks"—sheets of paper marked in pencil for cutting into the base shapes that are folded or rolled for a specific design—takes the viewer even closer to the origin of these forms, also hinting at the labor required to transform flat paper. Slemmons created many new sculptural designs for *Huesos*. Free from the distraction of color, the eye explores those points where leather strips enter the beads, setting up a conceptual interplay between the whole, the parts, and the interiors of the elements.

Today Mexico is much in the news, with its drug violence and economic instability. "Pride of Paper" tells a alternative tale of local success, and reveals facets of the collaborative process on which it rests: where natural and community resources are productively marshaled; dialogue



Installation view, *Orgullo en Papel (Feast)*, from "Pride of Paper" exhibition at Chicago Cultural Center, 2010

ALL PHOTOS: ROD SLEMMONS

Furthermore:
artepapelvistahermosa.blogsport.com

The array of objects in "Pride of Paper" speaks in a concrete language of the ethics of relationships and politics as well as aesthetics.

between Mexican design sensibilities and the developed world are equal and productive; where a growing craft practice helps a community step into the global economy. The atelier is seeing difficult times. Tourism has dropped dramatically due to the violence in Oaxaca, reducing local sales. But orders for paper and jewelry from outside the region continue to come in. For a decade, the Taller has endured and has seen modest profits while enabling its workers to support growing families with work that they can be proud of. Hopefully, this will continue. Slemmons was aware of the complexity of the local context from the beginning and notes, "Out of respect for the specific cultural needs of running a successful operation, I have refrained from business decisions or directives." The array of objects in "Pride of Paper" speaks in a concrete language of the ethics of relationships and politics as well as aesthetics. It critiques the first world's Romantic myths of the independent artist, the artistic ego, and public image. Such notions are ideologically very similar to the "American consultant to the third world," with its connotations of a will imposed and indigenous practices destroyed. Both are dismantled here, as many hands collaborate and produce "pride of paper."

The women Slemmons has worked with for the past decade have thanked her for being their teacher—and their friend. She is touched by this appreciation for their shared process (from which she gains no monetary profit). The atelier's papermakers and jewelry artisans have no specific training in the arts, yet they are familiar with Mexican artists and printmakers because of a populist art tradition. They embrace the aesthetic egalitarianism that can place paintings and sculptures alongside textile arts, ceramics, and other crafts. Slemmons notes that when she showed the women one of her exhibition catalogues, "they looked at it very intently and said, 'Oh, you are an artist making jewelry.'" First-world jewelers often labor an entire career and never gain this longed-for understanding. Trust, equality, respect, and pride take time to develop—and to forge sustaining networks across the boundaries that seem to separate individuals, cultures, and art forms.

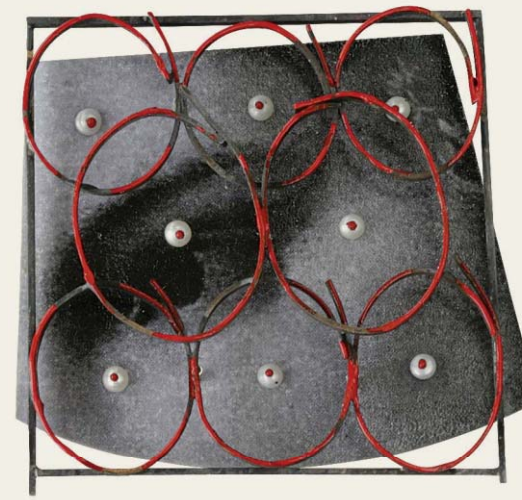
Tacey A. Rosolowski, Ph.D. is a freelance writer who currently lives in Buffalo, New York.

Ramón Puig Cuyàs
The Invisible Horizon

BY GLEN R. BROWN

Left: *Untitled* (brooch), 2009, from the "Primacolor" series
silver, plastic, ColorCore, nickel silver, enamel, epoxy painting
3 x 3 ⅜ x ¾"

Untitled (brooch), 2009, from the "Primacolor" series
silver, plastic, ColorCore, nickel silver, enamel, aventurine, acrylic and epoxy painting
2 ¾ x 3 ⅜ x ¾"



In media res (brooch), 2007,
from the "Imago Mundi" series
silver, plastic, paper, nickel
silver
2 ¾ x 2 ¾ x ½"

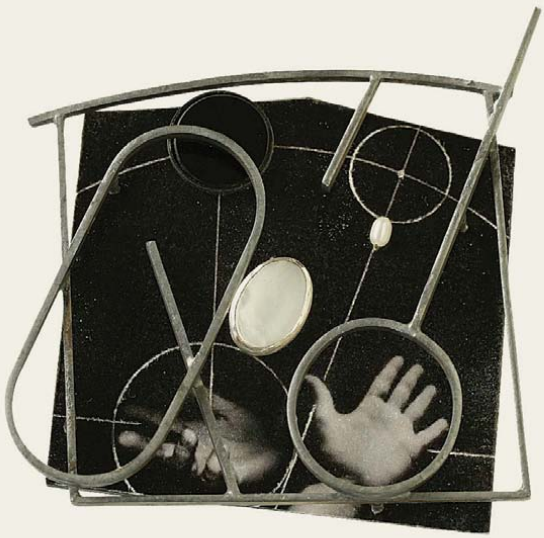
AS IT PROBES THE OBSCURITY of the infinitesimally small, science has by necessity come to rely more on visualization than on vision. Where neither the eye nor any of its most advanced technological prostheses can hope to descend, down in the tiniest seams of being, science makes of the imagination an indispensable tool. Furthering the aims of science becomes a creative endeavor, an enterprise of proposing the formerly unthinkable. In plumbing the invisible depths of the subatomic realm and speculating about the nature of existence, science becomes, in other words, increasingly like art.

To Spanish Catalan jeweler Ramón Puig Cuyàs, who in his youth contemplated a career in biology or astrophysics, the convergence of theoretical science and art on the plane of the imagination suggests that jewelry-making may draw motivation from the timeless desire to explain the world. Scientists and artists, he asserts, share the drive to grasp the invisible, the intuited, and differ mainly in their respective methods. The scientist follows a rational course, subjecting hypotheses to experimentation and seeking definitive, reproducible results. The artist, by contrast, is under no obligation to arrive at conclusions and may indeed value those consequences of inquiry that can never be exactly duplicated. The artist's natural inclination is not toward the testability of the hypothesis but rather the elusiveness of the metaphor. Because it leaves open the possibility of multiple interpretations, Puig Cuyàs argues, the uncertainty inherent in metaphor should be viewed as a prime asset of art rather than a liability.

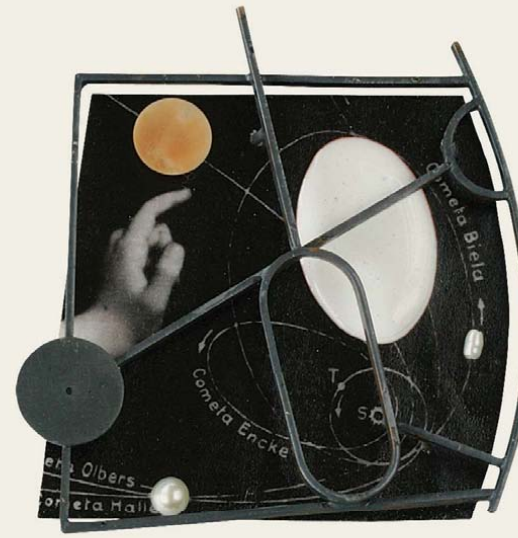
Not surprisingly, the unknown has fascinated Puig Cuyàs since childhood. While watching ships depart from the harbor of his native Barcelona to disappear in the shimmering haze on the Mediterranean's horizon, he dreamed of sailing off to discover the wonders of virginal shores. The desire to journey, to grapple with the fabric of the unknown, would later be effectively fulfilled through jewelry-making, a vocation that on the surface could not seem more different from the mariner's life and that, at any rate, would not require him to leave the familiar environs of his home port. (In the early '70s he completed a degree at Barcelona's Escola Massana, where he has taught since 1977 and currently serves as head of the department of jewelry.) But for Puig Cuyàs the relationship between physical travel and the conceptual exploration that occurs through problem solving in jewelry parallels the relationship between science and art: the former charts the concrete by delving into the unknown, while the latter hopes to grasp something that is ultimately infinite and elusive.

Deeming uncertainty a desirable outcome of art and not just a point of departure, Puig Cuyàs could not be expected to turn to the everyday for guidance in jewelry-making, nor would a logical, step-by-step procedure suit his goals. While he does employ sketches in the early development of his brooches and pendants, at the point where he begins a composition's physical construction, these give way to improvisation, to an easy flow in which unbidden but apt solutions can arise. His process must involve the hand as a physical point of contact with the unknown. Puig Cuyàs describes a dialogue that arises between an ambiguous "pre-vision"—a mental phenomenon spawned by "active attention," a listening to the inner unknown—and the hand that strives to maneuver that provocation into something momentarily insightful on a more universal plane. Marks on surfaces and the arrangement of parts in a piece of jewelry are for Puig Cuyàs records of this all-important process.

Art has been described as process before, of course.



Una salus (brooch), 2007, from the "Imago Mundi" series
silver, plastic, paper, nickel silver, pearl, mother of pearl
2 ⅜ x 2 ⅜ x ½"



Iluminatur a sole (brooch), 2009, from the "Utopos" series
silver, plastic, paper, nickel silver, emamel, pearl, coral
2 ⅜ x 2 ⅜ x ½"

His process must involve the hand as a physical point of contact with the unknown.

But for Puig Cuyàs art as process does not simply reveal the artist's inner life. It also provides the means to "invent a new reality," a poetic reality that can be shared with others through metaphor. When jewelry is the physical medium of this metaphor, the new reality is initiated by the artist's participation in a dialogue among "pre-vision," the hand and the material. It is only finalized however—only humanized, to use Puig Cuyàs's word—when it is worn by another person.

Puig Cuyàs's pendants and brooches attach a worth to materials that generally does not correlate with their commercial value. Gold might easily carry less functional weight than plastic in his works. To emphasize this point, he limits his materials primarily to those that possess little or no intrinsic value. Although silver is commonly employed in a structural capacity, its gleam is dulled by patination or hidden under opaque layers of enamel—as if to stress that no part of the jewelry will be allowed to get by simply on celebrity or natural allure, but instead must earn a significance for itself through negotiation, compromise, and integration with other elements. Because validity is therefore contextual, Puig Cuyàs's materials could be anything from plastic to paper and become precious nonetheless.

This pursuit manifests itself in various ways in Puig Cuyàs's recent brooches and pendants, taking, for example, the form of a figurative mapping in the "Imago Mundi" series of 2006–07. The title, borrowed from an encyclopedic study of cosmology, geography, and history by the twelfth-century theologian Honorius Augustodunensis, implies a blending of scientific inquiry, mysticism, and invention in quest of a tentative world image. The brooch *Sic itur astra*, with its implications of access to the stars, is a quiet combination of snow-white coral, an oval frame of darkly patinated silver wire above a largely obliterated surface of acrylic paint (which bears hints of furious pencil marks relating a dispersal of energy), and a background suggestive of the infinitude and solitude of the celestial dome. The brooch alludes equally to the unfathomable distances of outer space and the limitless depths of inner space. The dialectic between parts, its tensions heightened through a reduction of color to black and white, generates an atmosphere of ebbing and flowing energy, of cycles of concentration and dissolution that relates metaphorically to contexts of both quantum physics and astrophysics.

Sic itur astra (brooch), 2007, from
the “Imago Mundi” series
silver, plastic, nickel silver,
coral, acrylic painting
2 1/8 x 2 3/8 x 3/8”

Per accidents (brooch), 2007, from
the "Imago Mundi" series
silver, plastic, nickel silver, onyx
2 x 2 x 3/8"

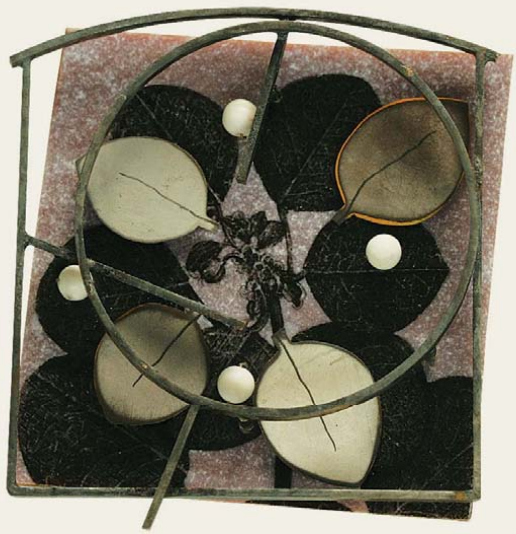
Scène du jardin II (brooch), 2010,
from the "Essence of Nature" series
silver, plastic, paper, nickel silver,
white quartz, choral, jade, epoxy
painting
2 x 2 ⅛ x ⅜"

Labyrinthus II (brooch), 2010, from
the "Essence of Nature" series
silver, plastic, paper, nickel silver,
onyx, epoxy painting
2 x 2 x ⅜"

Untitled (brooch), 2010,
from the "Net-Work" series
nickel, silver
2 ⅜ x 3 ⅛ x ¾"

In 2007 the "Imago Mundi" series gave way to the "Utopos" series, a transition partly explained by the titles, which suggest that the endeavor to form a tentative world image through a blend of intuition and inquiry leads naturally to idealization. The brooch *Iluminatur a sole*, with its labeled orbital diagrams, rigid framework of patinated silver wire, and white-on-black allusions to a chalkboard in a physics classroom, hints at a utopian (and hence only illusory) understanding based on abstract systems such as geometry. With the image of a hand, blurred and grayed by the enveloping darkness, Puig Cuyàs seems to say the new realities that jewelry reflects in its metaphors will always remain nebulous—metaphorical rather than literal—precisely because of their human origins.

In the late nineteenth century, the theorist Konrad Fiedler stressed that when art creates another world alongside this one it does so both through and for what could be called the artistic consciousness. Over the next 100 years, Modernists employed art as a means of illuminating that artistic consciousness, particularly in terms of its inclination to endow the worlds that it creates with both feeling and order. Like these artists, who focused their explorations alternately on the expressive and coloristic



The Four Moon (brooch), 2010, from the "Essence of Nature" series
silver, plastic, paper, nickel silver, white quartz
2 x 2 x 3/8"

They suggest a biologist's affinity for the microscopic world and an astrophysicists attraction to the "invisible horizon of the cosmos."

or the structural and monochromatic, in 2009 Puig Cuyàs produced the "Primacolor" works to elicit "the sensations produced by a burst of color," and the "Net-Work" series to explore a "strict compositional syntax." Like the distinctions between a Kandinsky Improvisation and a Picasso Cubist painting, the differences between the "Primacolor" brooches and the "Net-Work" pieces articulate a relationship between the rational, disciplined, Apollonian facilities of the mind and its impassioned, unrestrained, Dionysian tendencies.

Although he describes his previous series in searching, philosophical language, Puig Cuyas confesses that he simply felt the need to adopt an "uninhibited attitude" in his "Primacolor" series after four years of producing the "Imago Mundi" and "Utopos" works. The "Primacolor" series, comprising less than a dozen bright and playful brooches, was, in other words, something like a long exhale following a period of intense introspection, a spontaneous and disinterested release of energy to restore balance to the dynamic of the mind. Like his earlier brooches, the "Primacolor" works are composed as linear motifs—drawings, in a sense—rendered in silver wire over quadrilateral background planes. Vivid colors, particularly the primaries, animate these elements with near-neon vibrancy. The eye is a target as well as the composer of these bursts of color, which set the cones of the retina into complex pulsations of rhythm and dissonance.

In the "Net-Work" series, the background planes and the range of vibrant hues effectively fell away from the "Primacolor" works, leaving behind only skeletal drawings in space. Composed entirely of nickel silver darkened and dulled by liver of sulfur, the "Net-Work" pieces bring to mind the welded-iron works of Julio González, the cagelike compositions of Giacometti in his prewar Surrealist phase, or sculptor David Smith's three-dimensional drawings in steel. Order is the primary aim of the "Net-Work" series, an order that results less from a parceling of space into discrete subunits than from a harmonizing of arcs and straight lines, curves, and angles. Puig Cuyàs makes a point of comparing this ordering to the effects of polyphony in music, bringing to mind the Pythagorean "music of the spheres" and proposing it as a metaphor for a principle of order that is both mathematically precise and subtly emotive. The consequence of applying this principle is to make of the "Net-Work" brooches and pendants "fragments of cosmic architecture without weight."

After excursions into color and structure in the "Primacolor" and "Net-Work" series, Puig Cuyàs returned with renewed energy to the less tangible problems explored in his previous work. Produced for an exhibition at Taboo Studio in San Diego and a later show at the Galerie Slavik in Vienna, the five brooches of the 2010 "The Essence of Nature" series summarize the artist's longstanding ideas about art and science; his concepts of the unknown and the ways in which an artist might navigate it; his preference for assembling parts into complex compositions; and his reliance on non-precious materials rendered contextually precious through metaphor. These brooches conform to the artist's favored compositional format of linear elements that hover, like material drawings, in shallow spaces before backdrops of thin quadrilateral planes. They reflect on the artist's early impetus in an "imperious necessity" to know the unknown and to make visible the invisible; they suggest a biologist's affinity for the microscopic world and an astrophysicist's attraction to the 'invisible horizon of the cosmos"; and, most characteristic of all, they constitute—by means parallel to those of science but peculiar to art—tentative evocations of new realities.

Glen R. Brown is professor of art history at Kansas State University.

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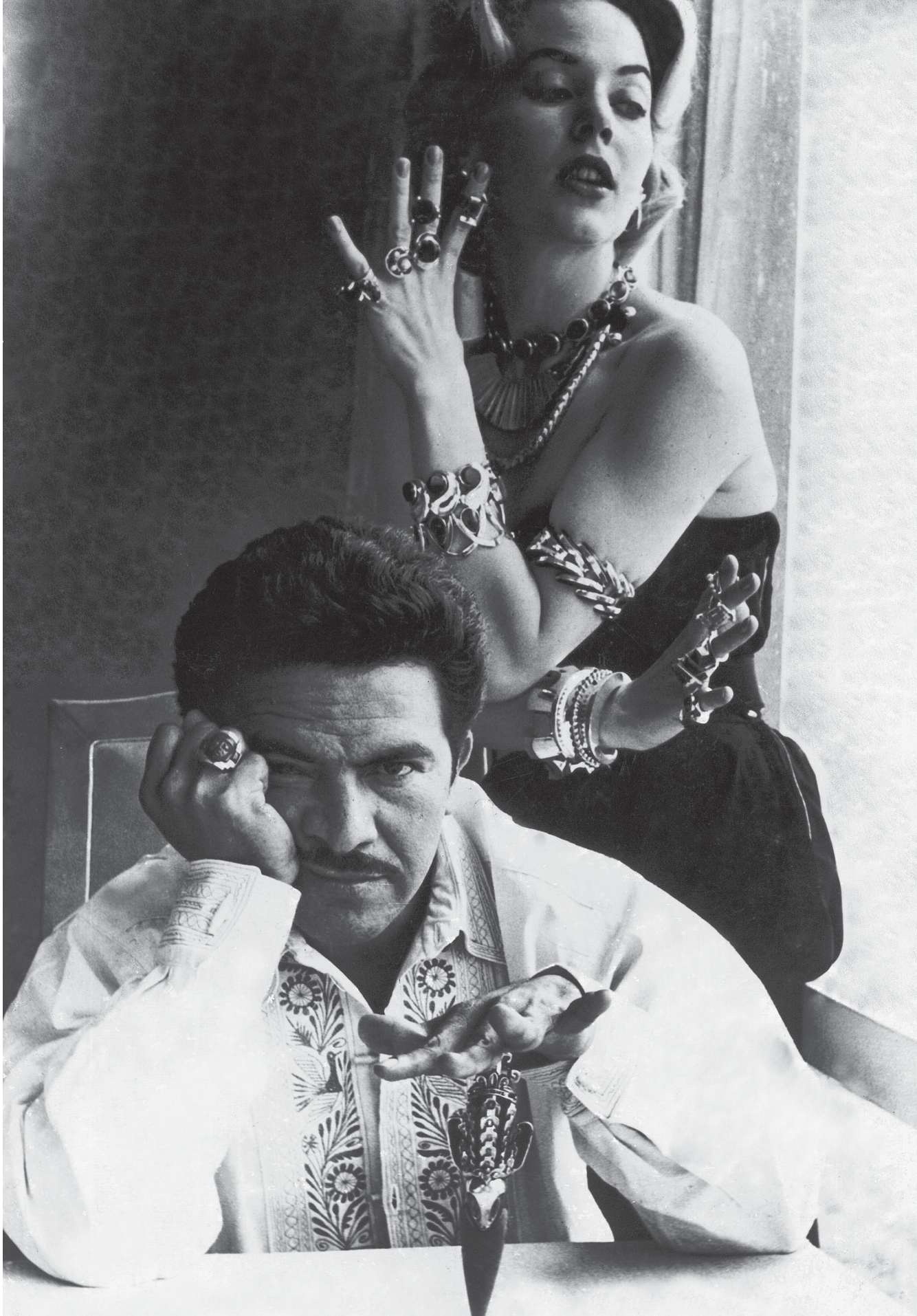
Antonio Pineda and the Silver Renaissance
Making Mexican Modern

BY MALIN WILSON-POWELL

Flower Belt Buckle, 1953–2009
oxidized silver, leather
width 6 ⅛"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

Antonio Pineda in 1956, with left hand atop his award-winning knife, and behind him a model adorned with his jewelry.
COURTESY OF ANTONIO PINEDA AND JAVIER RUIZ



IMAGINE A TEENAGER dressed in black leather, combat boots, armbands, tattoos, piercings, and silver chain jewelry coming across spiked cuffs in his grandmother's jewelry box. Mexican Modernist Antonio Pineda (1919–2009) is quite possibly the artist behind these prescient examples of bristling silver body art. In the 1950s, inspired by the shape of a World War II mine used to destroy submarines, Pineda used the motif of silver, onyx, or amethyst cones to fashion many variations of proto-Heavy Metal silver bracelets.[1] Pineda was one of several Mexican Modernist silversmiths who came of age and rose to international prominence during the 1930s. Now deemed the "Silver Renaissance," the period was one of groundbreaking technical innovation.

What confluence of events ignited a generation of silversmiths in this unprecedented burst of creativity, in the remote provincial village of Taxco, Mexico? A major traveling exhibition, "Silver Seduction: The Art of Mexican Modernist Antonio Pineda," recently organized by the Fowler Museum at UCLA, sheds welcome light onto the complex phenomena—fueled by Mexico's Enlightenment-inspired independence movement—that would replace aristocratic and divine control over silver with a thriving international market for local silversmiths.

Taxco remains a charming Colonial-era city, with a population of more than 50,000 and among them thousands of silversmiths. Situated in rugged terrain 45 miles southwest of Mexico City, it is a place of cobblestoned, narrow, winding streets, and whitewashed buildings with red tile roofs, where derelict silver mines honeycomb the surrounding hills.[2] Pre-Conquest silver mining and smithing was reserved for tribute and for crafting Aztec ceremonial and ruling class headdresses, pectorals, and bracelets. Within a decade of Hernán Cortés's 1521 conquest of the Aztec empire, haciendas established by the conqueror or his soldiers operated Taxco's silver mines. Modern mining on a huge scale was begun in the mid-eighteenth century by José de la Borda, who built the extravagant Churrigueresque church Santa Prisca, where a number of altarpieces from floor to ceiling are covered in gold.[3] Taxco was plundered on a vast scale, eventually accounting for 80 percent of the silver exported from Mexico to Europe and Asia by sea.[4] This massive extraction of billions of ounces of New World bullion became the currency that made the Old World's commercial and then industrial revolution possible.

Roads were built, and Spain's Manila galleons docking at Acapulco returned with Chinese jewelry and embroidery, creating an appetite for gold and silver filigree, especially for fancy *charros* (horsemen) apparel and their tack. In post-Conquest New Spain, Taxco was a relatively autonomous dependency of Mexico City, an artisanal community divided into a complex *casta* system based on race. The *indio,* or indigenous craftsmen, made furniture, pottery, textiles, and wrought iron, with the exception of working silver, which was punishable by death. After the Mexican War of Independence from Spain, when the state of Guerrero was created in 1850, Taxco was chosen as the municipal seat.

An era of heady nationalism followed the Mexican Revolution's 10 years of chaos and upheaval. When the revolution ended in 1920, scholars and artists spread across the vast, diverse Mexican countryside to every distant valley and village. The new government was staking the nation's future on a belief that a modern identity of

ANTONIO PINEDA
Cuff, 1953–2009
silver, onyx
width 3 ½"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

What confluence of events ignited a generation of silversmiths in this unprecedented burst of creativity, in the remote provincial village of Taxco, Mexico?

racial equality could be rooted in rescuing the popular arts of the indigenous past, emphasizing rural, ancestral wisdom, and manual skills.[5] The land itself would be the glue for *mestizaje*, or cultural blending, of people speaking 86 different languages. As early as September 1921, an unprecedented exhibition, "Las artes popular en México," opened in Mexico City. Curated by the Modernist painter of volcanoes Dr. Atl (aka Gerardo Murillo), another version of the show opened in Los Angeles in 1922. With hindsight, this exhibition was hailed as "the triumph of an intellectual project of national rediscovery."[6]

Thus the stage was set for *taxqueño* Antonio Pineda, born in 1919 to a progressive, artistic, and politically active family. Four centuries of European cultural, economic, and political domination was over, along with the 35-year stranglehold of dictator Porfirio Diaz. Pineda's father was elected mayor of Taxco in 1930, the same year Antonio enrolled in the Escuela de Pintura al Aire Libre, one of the new "open-air" experimental painting schools.[7] Pineda then attended school in Mexico City, returning to Taxco during the summers to work at expatriate William Spratling's Taller de las Delicias (Workshop of Delights), the first big silversmithing workshop, which opened in 1931.

Much has been written about the importance of Spratling (1900–67), who was a New Orleans architect and instructor at Tulane when he first visited the region in the 1920s. As a guest of American ambassador Dwight Morrow, Spratling was enlisted to unify Mexico's ethnic, linguistic, and political factions. In 1928 Morrow purchased a weekend home, La Casa Mañana, in Cuernavaca, from Frederick Davis, a prominent Mexico City silversmith and art dealer, who exhibited the work of Rivera and Orozco.[8] They were all swept up in the fervor of the great post-revolutionary reconstruction, as were many who came to Taxco, including artists Frida Kahlo and Miguel Covarrubias and authors Hart Crane, William Faulkner, and John Reed. Davis and Spratling joined the movement led by their friends Los Tres Grandes muralists—Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueros—to use distinctly Mexican sources of inspiration, especially the Mayan codex, along with native plants and animals. (The much older and volatile Siqueros, based in Taxco from 1930 to 1932, befriended the young Pineda, who carried his paint box and served as a model. Pineda watched the very conscious construction of "Modern Mexican design," including new architectural styles promoted by Juan O'Gorman and Juan Segura called "neo-pre-Columbian." He would eventually use their mestizaje design vocabulary of geometric forms and inclines, especially elements drawn from indigenous monolithic structures and pre-Columbian ceramic decoration, infused with the tenets of Art Deco.[9]

Pineda entered Spratling's workshop as a *zorrita* or apprentice, sweeping the floors and assisting the smiths, all the while striving for permission to sit down at the bench, or *agarrar el arco* (take hold of the arc). He spent an entire summer learning to cut a straight line for a brooch inspired by an Aztec ornamental design, or *greca*.

Spratling's uniquely structured *taller* was a hybrid of the local artisan workshop and the Beaux Arts charrette, encouraging experimentation. The result was unheard-of innovation. He introduced design teams and "hallmarks" and organized yearly in-house competitions that culminated

ANTONIO PINEDA
Cuff, 1953–2009
silver, onyx
width 3 ½"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

in an annual Silver Fair. Las Delicias was the incubator for the first generation of world-class designers who would open their own workshops, among them Pineda, Héctor Aguilar, Antonio Castillo, Margot of Taxco, Jean Puiforcat, and Valentín Vidaurreta. Spratling not only insisted on the highest technical standards and pushed his silversmiths to develop their own style, he also made them promise they would never copy his designs if they left his studio. Pineda credited Spratling with being "the author who lit the fire of modern silver work" in Taxco.[10]

During the Depression, Taxco boomed. Attracted by a favorable exchange rate and untouched colonial charm, it became a destination for celebrities of all stripes. The commodious atmosphere and excellent shopping brought movie stars, European royalty, filmmakers, and politicians. Outside influences rubbed off on *taxqueño* silversmiths who became celebrities in their own right, catering to the likes of the Rockefellers, Maria Felix, Sergei Eisenstein, and Marlene Dietrich.

Mexican Modernism was promoted through both official channels and more personal collaborations. Morrow, Davis, and Davis's assistant Rene d'Harnoncourt raised funds for a major traveling exhibition of Mexican art that opened at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1930.[11] A new highway connecting Mexico City, Taxco, and Acapulco was completed in 1931, and full-service hotels in Taxco for tourists soon followed, well before Acapulco.[12] Considering the current bloodshed in Mexico and ongoing desperate attempts to quell drug violence, it is remarkable that during the 1930s Americans looked up from the Dust Bowl and soup lines to admire Mexico's success in building an authentically national mode of art out of the turmoil of their revolution. A 1933 *New York Times* article noted "the present enormous vogue of things Mexican."[13] Late in the 1930s, as the threat of European Fascism spread, President Roosevelt strengthened U.S. bonds with Mexico through a Good Neighbor Policy. [14]

In 1936, after a two-year apprenticeship with Spratling, Pineda left for Mexico City to work briefly in the *taller* of Vidaurreta, a painter and silversmith influenced by Art Nouveau. Restless and trying to find his way in the world, Pineda returned to Taxco at the end of the year to work in the mining industry; he then moved to Puebla to try automotive repair work, and even considered going to aviation school. Ultimately he came home to try his hand in sales and management at Spratling's store. By 1939 he had accumulated a fully integrated knowledge of silver from mining to merchandising, and decided to open his own taller. He borrowed money from his brother Manuel, hired former Vidaurreta silversmiths Jose Gilles, the Benjamin brothers, and Angel Castro, and recruited his brother Bruno as head of operations.

Pineda's first traceable designs recall Vidaurreta's Art Nouveau natural forms, relying heavily on chasing and *pavonado* (the use of oxides to darken crevices and accentuate raised forms).[15] Throughout his long life Pineda candidly recalled his twenties as a harrowing period of struggle to find his personal "modern" style. He consciously left behind Mexican curio clichés as well as the Baroque church-inspired style that prevailed, orienting himself to bolder, simpler, and explicitly more cosmopolitan influences. He understood not only the paradigms shaping modern Mexico but looked at the universality of geometry.

WILLIAM SPRATLING
Quetzalcoatl Brooch, 1939-40
silver
width 3 ¼"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

Bracelet, 1949-53
silver
diam. 2 ¼"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

Once Pineda found his distinctive design vocabulary, he created such extraordinary pieces as the necklace and matching bracelet inspired by the alternate convex-concave pattern of local scoop-shaped roofing tiles. The 1940s necklace is a hefty fan-shaped ripple of silver inlaid with amethyst. It is at once obvious and subtle, an eloquent and modern iteration of the everyday and indigenous.

Pineda's mature style is a melding of modernist machine aesthetic with inspirations drawn from modest, vernacular material, including the lowly matchstick. He found inspiration everywhere: fireworks, birdcages, and natural elements like armadillo scales and birds' feathers. He was particularly taken with the crescent shapes. That his designs appear so straightforward and clean belies their underlying finesse and sensitivity to the complexity of the human bodies they adorn. On close inspection, they are refined architectural and engineering feats with flexible segments and perfectly placed concealed closures, clasps, and hinges. It is said that a Pineda fits the body perfectly, that it balances on the muscular-skeletal structure and feels just right when it is worn. Many are pure fashion statements, body art ahead of its time, intended to introduce drama into the moment and to highlight the theatrical confidence of the wearer.

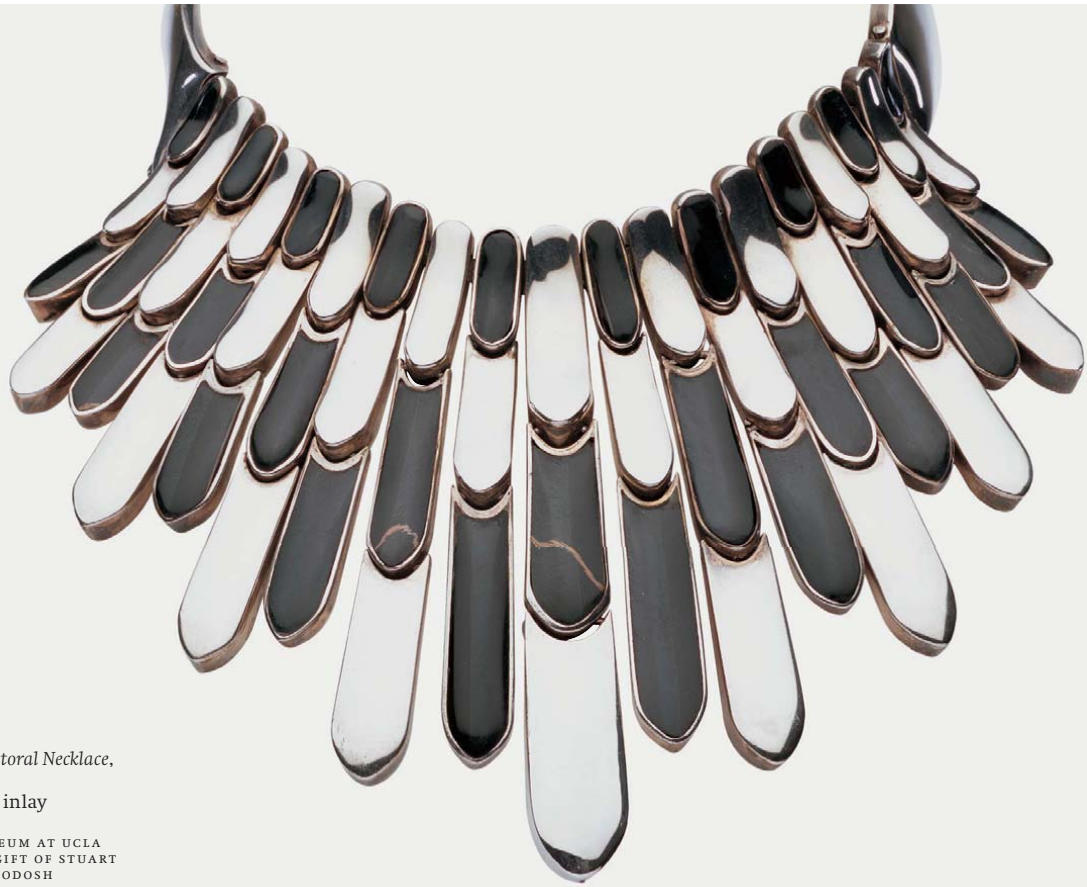
After 1944, Pineda had access to more, bigger, and better precious and semi-precious stones than any other Taxco silversmith. That year the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco organized an exhibition of his work alongside that of the Danish silversmith Georg Jensen (1866–1935) and American artist Margaret De Patta (1903–64). By this time Pineda's *taller* distributed to stores throughout Mexico and in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Argentina. Taxco *talleres* were also kept busy with dog tag production for U.S. troops and large wholesale orders from U.S. jewelers who couldn't get merchandise from Europe. The Taxco School was known for the excellence of their craftsmanship and the modernity of their designs.

In San Francisco, Pineda met Richard Gump, heir to Gump's prestigious department store, who bought all of Pineda's 160 pieces from the Legion of Honor exhibition. In an 2000 interview Pineda recalled: "[Gump's was] very famous for specializing in Oriental art and stones. [When] I left San Francisco, Richard Gump and Mark Rosenblatt, the vice president of the company said, 'Antonio, here is something for you to keep occupied.' It was a large collection of gems, Oriental gems, jades, obsidian, just [arrived] from China. Every design I made for a number of years was for Gump's. They kept me busy."[16] However, during the 1940s silver was rationed and more expensive and in 1946 the Mexican government instituted three separate export taxes on handcrafted silver. Taxco's vigorous wholesale silver market was redirected to retail and many of the *talleres* opened showrooms in the city center with branches in resort areas, often featuring furniture, ironwork, leatherwork, textiles, and ceramics.

As his business burgeoned, Pineda's workshop had expanded from the original 10 silversmiths to 85. In the heydays of the 1950s, Pineda relinquished hands-on smithing to focus solely on design, and estimated that he created about 10 new designs each month.[17] He explored new dimensions of cutting, repoussé, and chiseling with master smiths he hired to realize his design experiments.

Pineda's mature style is a melding of modernist machine aesthetic with inspirations drawn from modest, vernacular material.

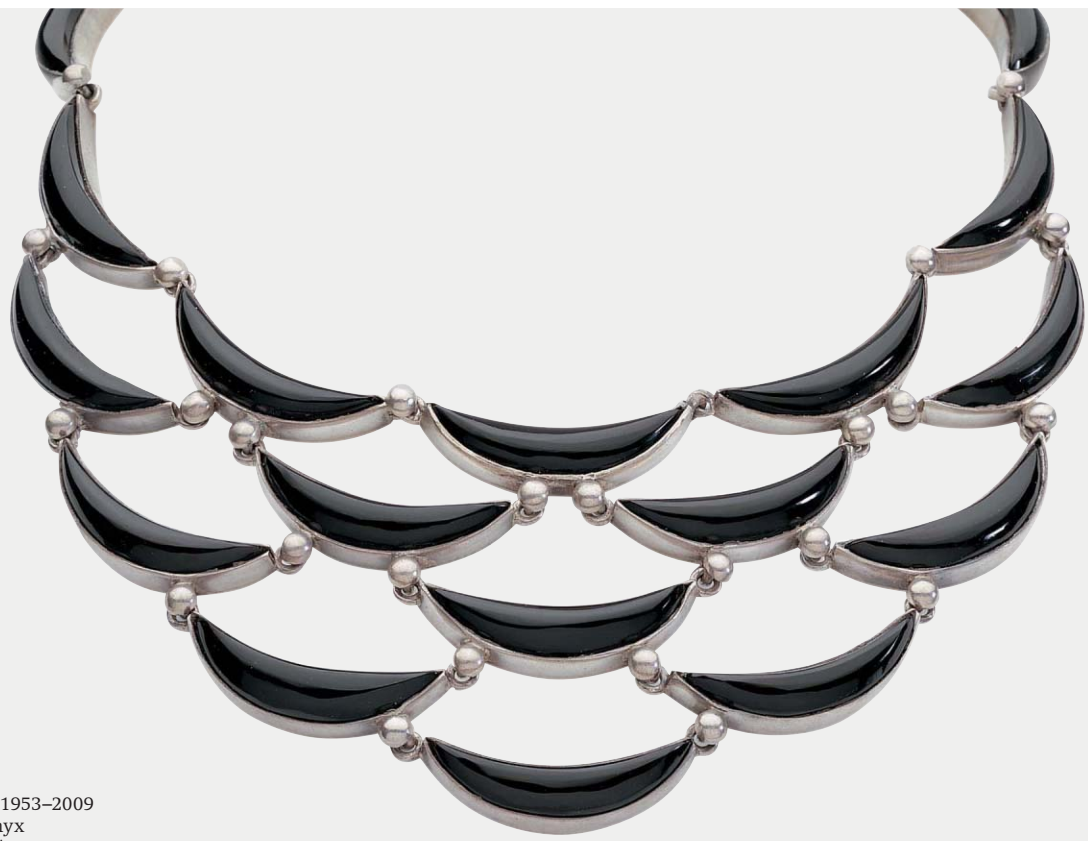
Bracelet, 1948–53
silver, onyx
diam. 2 ¼"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH



"Feather" Pectoral Necklace,
1953–2009
silver, onyx inlay
height 8 ¾"
FOWLER MUSEUM AT UCLA
X2008.15.7; GIFT OF STUART
AND CINDY HODOSH

Necklace, 1953–2009
silver, jade
height 6 ¾"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND
STUART HODOSH

Necklace, 1953–2009
silver, moonstone
diam. 6 ⅛"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH



Necklace, 1953–2009
silver, onyx
height 7"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

In this way each *taxqueno* silver workshop developed their signature look. Pineda's work grew increasingly modernist and sculptural, giving an impression of being more substantial and weighty.

In 1952 Pineda opened a lavish store facing the *zócalo*, appointed with ample armchairs and handsome bilingual salesmen. He displayed only one example of a design at a time and would custom-fit pieces to each client's proportions. That same year his cousin, the well-known Modernist Sigi Pineda, opened his own shop Los Plateros. The proximity of high-society Cuernavaca, and McCarthyism in the U.S., drove many from Hollywood to Taxco to mingle with their blacklisted expatriate friends, along with industrialists, the international set, and G.I. artists on summer programs. Woolworth heiress Barbara Hutton would spend 150,000 pesos in a single afternoon in a Taxco *taller*.[18] Affordable airfares further increased the tourist population, and Taxco—replete with 150 silver shops—lived up to its reputation as the center of exemplary Modernist silver production. Pineda, like other famous designers, entertained the glitterati as a matter of course. He met them afternoons at his own Bar Bertha, the most popular watering hole for the international set, and he invited them to his ranch on the weekends for fiestas.

No other Taxco School silversmith used as many costly oversized semiprecious stones and matched stones set closely together for major impact. They emphasized the architecture of his pieces, sometimes appearing free-floating, other times deeply embedded. He often had them specially cut into unusual shapes. Pineda's work became increasingly spare, angular, and dramatic, and—unlike earlier pieces from solid silver—he was able to construct them by perfecting the *cartoneado*, a technique wherein a hollow form uses materials such as asbestos for support and gold for soldering joints. This way he could build large and sumptuous pieces that were very light and wearable. Just as the hard geometric lines of many of his necklaces draw attention to the soft skin of the wearer, the cool tones of moonstones and pearls with the sheen of silver further heightened the contrast with warm, living flesh.

In the mid-1950s the large Taxco workshops began to decline precipitously. A new highway from Mexico City bypassed Taxco for Acapulco, the result of a corrupt inside deal by then-president Miguel Aleman, who had financial interests in Acapulco. The second big blow was the institution of Social Security in 1958, with the additional provision that payments were also due retroactively on all wages to 1956. It was a financial burden the *talleres* could not pay and their employees disbursed. Piecework was meted out to master silversmiths who began working at their family homes, or in *taller familiars,* a condition that persists today. The quality of much of the silver work slipped and many of the large, famous *talleres* shuttered their shops.

In 1962, the resilient Pineda built an exclusive Colonial-style shop in Acapulco called *Casa de las Once Columnas* (House of Eleven Columns), but by 1964 he sold the showroom to his brother and went to Spain, where he lived for a year. Always a proud *taxqueño*, maestro Pineda returned home, where he spent his later years experimenting with sculpture and establishing the Museo de La Plateria (Museum of Silverwork), next to his former shop. Entirely at his own expense, Pineda collected 80 prize-winning pieces

"Roof-Tile" Bracelet, 1953–2009
silver, amethyst
diam. 2 ¾"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

"Matchstick" Bracelet, 1953–2009
silver, obsidian
width 2 ¾"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

by his peers and commissioned murals to tell the tale of silver in Taxco. Along with Museo Virreynal de Taxco, the Spratling Collection of silver and pre-Columbian artifacts, these examples of extraordinary silver work stand as both inspiration and challenge to future generations of designers committed to handcrafted silver, many of whom are children and descendants of the grand old masters from the 1930s through the 1950s.[19]

In retrospect, Taxco's leap into greatness seems an unlikely efflorescence of geographic, political, and revolutionary phenomena. Ironically, its intricate historic fabric remains intact because it was bypassed by the brutalities of '50s modernization, and its picturesque irregular cobblestone streets—antithetical to car culture and dangerous for pedestrians—turned out to be fundamental to its official designation as National Treasure of Colonial architecture in 2001. During the height of expansion by the city's Modernist master silversmiths, it was transformed from a quaint outpost into a sophisticated cosmopolitan crossroads for artists and designers, a legacy still vital today. This recent Pineda exhibition advances the scholarship and important legacy of Taxco's great designers from this place and time.

MaLin Wilson-Powell is an independent writer and curator living in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Furthermore:
www.fowler.ucla.edu

1. Stromberg, Gobi, *Silver Seduction: The Art of Mexican Modernist Antonio Pineda*, Los Angeles: Fowler Museum at UCLA, 2008, p. 148.
2. Industrial Minera México announced the closure of the last major mining operation in 2007.
3. Churrigueresque is an extravagant substyle of Baroque architecture and ornament found in Spain, Latin America and Portugal, named after architect José Benito de Churriguera (1665–1725).
4. It is estimated that 10 percent of silver mined in Mexico was not exported.
5. Ibid, p. 63. Anthropologist Manuel Garmo, a student of Franz Boas at Columbia in 1909–1910, was the primary architect of this plan.
6. Ibid, p. 67, a quote from scholar Olivier Debroise's forthcoming book *La invención de arte Mexican (The Invention of Mexican Art).*
7. Based upon the methodology developed by Adolfo Best Maugard (1891-1964), who studied pre-Hispanic Mexican art and uncovered seven elements: (point and straight line, spiral, circle, semicircle or arc, wavy line, "s" shape, and zigzag) that could be used to build any form from nature. Alfredo Zalce and Tamiji Kitagawa were Pineda's teachers at the Taxco school.
8. Ibid., p. 71. Dwight Morrow arrived October 23, 1927 as Ambassador in Mexico City.
9. Ibid, p. 69.
10. Quote from video interview "The Art of Antonio Pineda" for the exhibition "Silver Seduction: The Art of Mexican Modernist Antonio Pineda," Los Angeles: Fowler Museum at UCLA, 2006.
11. Ibid., p.71. With funds from the Carnegie Foundation, Ambassador Morrow hired René d'Harnoncourt to curate the exhibition with further support from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Federation of Arts.
12. Ibid, p. 23. Mexico set up its first tourist commission in 1928.
13. Ibid., p. 21.
14. Ibid., p. 26.
15. Ibid., p. 31. This was a widely used approach of the Los Castillo workshop.
16. Ibid., p. 35. Quote from Patrick Kapty, "Interview with Antonio Pineda" *Modern Silver Magazine*, www.modernsilver.com, 2000.
17. Stodd, Gabrille, "Antonio Pineda: An Interview from Taxco," for *Modern Silver Magazine*, www.modernsilver.com, 2005.
18. Ibid., p. 47.
19. These include his nephew, prize-winning silversmith Sergio Gomez, along with Mimi and Wolmar Castillo, two of Antonio Castillo's five children, and Carmen Tapia, daughter of designer and *taller patron* Ezequiel Tapia.

No other Taxco School silversmith used as many costly oversized semiprecious stones and matched stones set closely together for major impact.

Domed Cuff, 1953–2009
silver, amethyst
width 2 ¾"
COLLECTION OF CINDY TIETZE AND STUART HODOSH

Alert, 2010, from the "Remains" series
plastic, rubber, paint, rope, silver, steel
6 ½ x 5"

Robin Quigley Memories, Dreams, and Reflections

BY ANDREA DINOTO

ONE DAY IN 1992, artist Robin Quigley, her husband Rick, and their six-year-old daughter Chloe were enjoying the beach on the island of Eleuthera in the Bahamas when her gold wedding band flew off her hand and into the turquoise waters. Gone forever, surely. "It made me think, 'Somebody will find it someday,'" she says. "Gold is always there." Her husband wasn't so philosophical. "He was challenged." So every morning for the next several days, he donned goggles and dove to look for the ring; and, incredibly, two hours before their plane was scheduled to leave the island, he found it, partially buried, under water.

To capture the moment, Quigley created the equivalent of a snow globe crossed with a Joseph Cornell box. She made a smaller version of her wedding ring, one that fit her daughter perfectly ("My ring meant a lot to her symbolically") and had it engraved with the date of the event, then placed it in an antique apothecary bottle together with pale pink beach sand from Eleuthera and water. Shake it up, and the sand swirls, then settles, so that the little gold ring reveals itself every time. This engaging lost-and-found memento says much about Quigley's approach to her art, in which memories, dreams, places, people, events, found objects, and encounters with nature find expression in evocative, often playful, sometimes poignant forms.

Over a 30-year career as a teacher and a studio artist, Quigley has produced a series of themed collections, unique pieces, and limited-production lines (simple, affordable, casual jewelry), each markedly different from the other. The Robin Quigley who created the "Shadows" series that intentionally honors Ellsworth Kelly's tight formal compositions with elegant minimalist shapes of blackened silver and mother of pearl is the same artist who makes surreal objects out of ephemeral materials and found objects that challenge the very concept of jewelry.

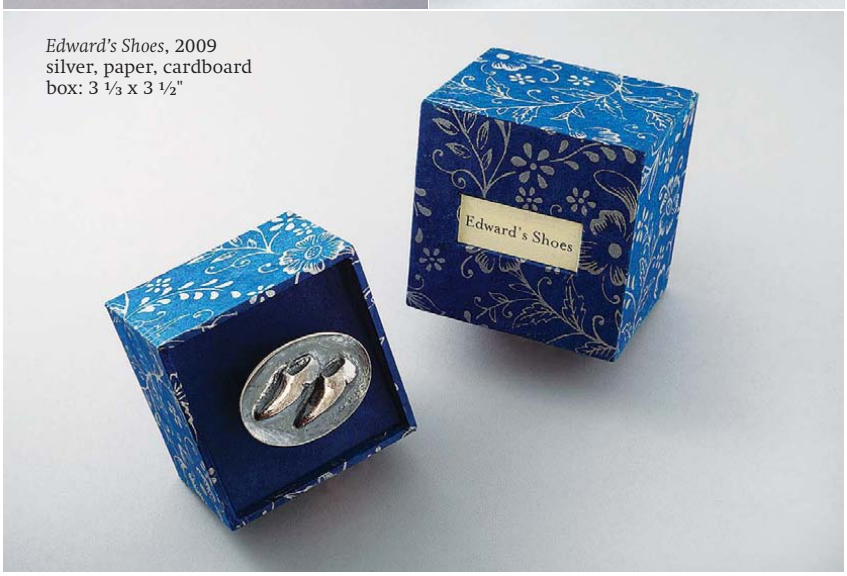
Quigley has worked in precious metals, wood, and plastic, even seaweed and garlic. Her iconic motifs include masks, body parts, leaves and flowers, animals, cartoons, and traffic signage, while her formal modes range from abstract to literal to something in between. The unifying principle behind this astonishing versatility is Quigley's own exquisite sensitivity to experience and to the world around her.

Head of the Jewelry and Metalsmithing Department at the Rhode Island School of Design, where she has been on the faculty since 1981, Quigley completed her own academic studies in the '70s. After earning a BFA at the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia in 1974, she pursued an MFA in sculpture at RISD, where she studied under the renowned silversmith Jack Prip.[1] Of her quirky early holloware designs, (a bed-of-nails fruit bowl; a tall vase on wheels), Quigley says: "They carry a playful yet formal quality that I gained from working with him." Quigley returned to Philadelphia in 1976 to teach at Philadelphia College of Art, then in 1978 had a one-person show at the Helen Drutt Gallery. The Drutt show, which included work in precious metals, led Quigley to ponder the disparate markets of one-off work versus commercial jewelry, leading in 1979 to the launch of P's & Q's, a production jewelry venture in collaboration with fellow RISD grad Janet Prip Birn. Birn (Jack Prip's daughter) was based in Rhode Island, a jewelry manufacturing center since the early twentieth century. She brought to the venture a familiarity with the consumer market along with design expertise. Quigley describes the resultant line of plastic costume jewelry—amusing, brightly colored geometrical forms—as "a merger between our individual aesthetics and our mutual iconic take on 1980s music and fashion trends." Both partners were immersed in pop, blues, and jazz—"what we listened to when we worked," says Quigley, noting that their studio was located on the fourth floor over Lupo's Heartbreak Hotel, a bar and live-music venue in Providence. Perhaps this proximity contributed to the visual bounce evident in their "Pudgies" group of plump heart, cross, circle, stick and bean shapes, which seem as fresh today as they were in 1980. But the P's & Q's line lasted for only a year and a half, perhaps, as Quigley believes, because it was truly ahead of its time. As the project came to a close in 1981, Jack Prip, who had retired from RISD, encouraged Quigley to apply for an open teaching position there. She was hired, and today at 61 looks back not only on

Tale of the Lost and Found Ring, 1992
glass, sand, 18k gold, water, wax, paper, string
5 x 2 ½"

Wheel Vessel, 1991
patinated bronze
14 x 5 x 5"

Edward's Shoes, 2009
silver, paper, cardboard
box: 3 ⅓ x 3 ½"



a distinguished tenure at the institution, but also on a body of studio work that swings from process-intensive classic metalsmithing (which she continues to teach) to the more spontaneous and conceptual mixed-media work of the last ten years. Of the divergence in style amongst her various series over the decades, Quigley offers that the demands of the school year cut back on her studio time. "This [teaching schedule] breaks up connections to the last group worked on," she says, "so by the time I can work again, I have new ideas." But not every artist has Quigley's combined qualities of resilience of mind, flexibility with materials, and insatiable curiosity about the world around her. When considering any and all of her work, connection is surely the operative word. It may not manifest itself between one group of work and another, but it's definitely in play between the artist and the stimulus at hand.

Residencies and teaching fellowships have offered Quigley extensive travel and exposure to cultures and individuals that have inspired both unique pieces and whole collections. In 1994, after teaching at the Salzburg Summer Academy in Austria, she produced a series of wrapped steel wire pendant and earring forms associated with the trip: pretzels, bike wheels, and legs, which became a sterling production line. Quigley created her jewelry series "Souvenir" ("to remember" in French) as a record of a three-month residency in 2003 at the newly opened Gauguin Cultural Center in the Marquesas, the Tahitian islands where Paul Gauguin lived, painted, and in 1901, died. She relished being plunged into this tropical exoticism, where she lived in a bungalow in the town of Atuona on the island of Hive Oa, literally steps from Gauguin's Maison du Jouir (House of Pleasure).[2] For the collection she used indigenous materials—wood, coca shell, mother of pearl, coral, and pearl—to create pieces that became abstract representations of Polynesian symbology (the tiki hand), flora (the fragrant tiare flower), and even the Southern Cross, a constellation visible only in the Southern hemisphere. In another instance, Quigley created a single silver ring—*Edward's Shoes*— in which a pair of elegant men's shoes is carved in low relief into a shallow saucer shape. The ring is a tribute to the dapper, aristocratic art collector Edward James (1907–84), who was a great patron of the Surrealists and owned seminal works by Magritte, Dali, and others. In 1971 James established West Dean College in Chichester, England, as an arts education center where Quigley spent a residency in 2009. "I was provided with room and board and a small stipend," she says. "In return I was expected to work in the studio where classes are held and leave a 'trace' of my time there," hence the ring. A photo Quigley saw of James's "gorgeous Italian shoes" inspired her choice of subject. Her rendition appears as a surreal apparition that might easily inhabit a Magritte painting: banal, yet suggestive of a deeper narrative dictated by the unconscious.

When considering any and all of her work, connection is surely the operative word.

Formula, 2007, from the "Flashback" series enameled steel, 18k gold, porcelain pendant: 2 ½ x 5"

Quigley aptly describes her work as "guided by active dialogue between the subject and me." There is an intensely personal element in every design, which could be jocular, meditative, or even deeply poignant, as is the case with two pieces (one recent, one not) that reveal themselves to be highly unusual forms of mourning jewelry. The brooch *Odd Pair*, part of the 2010 "Remains" collection exhibited at Gallery Loupe in Montclair, New Jersey,

Seascape (brooch), 1999, from the "Sea" series
fiberglass, paint, 18k gold
3 ½ x 2"
PHOTO: KAREN PHILIPPI

consists of fragments of two toothless combs set upright in a muted Morandiesque still life. The combs, barely recognizable as such (they could be abstract penguins, or crab claws) present a surreal, ambiguous presence. Quigley, when pressed to explain, reveals that the piece on its deepest level is a memorial to her sister, a hairdresser, who tragically took her own life in 2010. The brooch is, she says, "a portrait of her that in my own mind still comes off as a composition." Decades earlier, in 1983, to commemorate her father's passing, she created her widely exhibited *Fringe Bracelet,*[3] a round form fringed with hammered wire that makes a soft rustling sound reminiscent of primitive rattles used in ceremonies of life and death. "Helen Drutt purchased one because her husband, the poet, also died that year," says Quigley, who later spun off variations of the design into production work with different types of fringe, some with color.

Quigley's remarkable ability to move effortlessly among styles and forms may stem in part from a peripatetic Midwestern childhood, during which her family moved 11 times before she graduated from high school. Quigley's father, originally a photographer and filmmaker, worked in television production and traveled widely, setting up stations around the country. Quigley traces her love of cartoon images to having watched a lot of TV cartoons as a kid. "They're really carefully placed, thought-through shapes," she says. "They deal with action, have a life. They do things." She might be describing the cat and dog druzy stone brooches in the "Remains" collection, together with a pair of black-and-white rabbit pendant necklaces, all of which exude a kind of dazed,

Knock Knock, 2010, from the "Remains" series
sequins, plastic, paint, EPS foam, glass beads
pendant: 2 x 5 ½"

Rings (Egg and Square), 2000, from the "Shard" series
porcelain, 18k gold
1 ½ x 1 ½"
PHOTO: KAREN PHILIPPI

Mirror Reflection (brooch), 2002, from the "Shadow" series
silver, mother of pearl
3 x 3 ½"
PHOTO: KAREN PHILIPPI

Quigley switches gears in order to indulge her love of found objects...

Krazy-Kat expressiveness. Quigley brings a related graphic sense to a series of brooches she created in 2007 for her "Flashback" series, which was folded into the "Remains" exhibition. She opted to work with readily available materials—wood, paper, plastic, canvas, and pigment—that could be easily and quickly assembled because, she says, "I didn't want process to interrupt my connection, my initial intent." The seven roughly three-by-three-inch squares are basically paintings depicting abstract and recognizable forms that include a cartoony quarter note, two raised dots of color, a collage with a blue hand reaching for a vibrating pink ball, and two semi-abstract landscapes titled *Kansas* and *Nebraska* that are born of the American primitive tradition. Although they are nominally brooches, Quigley is loath to label them as such.

Within the same collection, Quigley switches gears in order to indulge her love of found objects that she has collected over time and here become elements in complex necklaces, some with moving parts. Through her found-object work, she seeks to narrow the gap between valued personal possessions and discarded objects,"[4] she says, turning commonplace items into shimmering talismans, surreal collages, or in the case of the necklaces, toylike pop-ups that seem to be posing existential questions: In, out? Up, down? Life, death? One formidable pendant necklace is simply a hunk of orange plastic broken off from a traffic cone and formed into a two-part hinged shape that glows like an abstract heart. In another, a bar suspended from a long chain of handmade gold links is hung with an assortment of tiny bleached animal bone fragments, seemingly delicate yet eternal, that she had collected from as far afield as Australia and India. In yet another example, the 2008 pendant *Formula* is a tiny white enamel funnel through which a miniscule golden doll threaded on a chain of porcelain beads can be drawn in and out. On her web site Quigley has posted videos of several of these necklaces being worked or shaken to demonstrate their interactive possibilities.

Collecting, for Quigley, is something of a psycho-aesthetic reclamation project, in which not only objects but also scraps and shards of widely disparate materials can be repurposed to convey both aesthetic and iconographic meaning. For a 1999 "Sea" series she cut fragments of a weathered fiberglass boat hull ("collected for its remarkable patina") into fish, clam, and seaweed shapes, then laid them over gold so that the glowing rim would suggest a "halo that the sun's light imparts on all it touches," she says. For her 2002 "Shards" exhibition of bold gold rings, she used shards of crackled New England pottery found washed up on the beach near her home. "At first, I collected interesting shard examples just for the pleasure of the 'find'," she wrote in that show's artist's statement. "Later I began to see them as potential jewels." Taken with their "beautiful abstract compositions…random coloration and exotic patinas," she eventually cut the chunks into "jewels" shaped like eggs, double yolks, and squares in which the crackle patterns appear as delicate aerial views of the earth

Kansas, 2007,
from the "Flashback" series
wood, seaweed, graphite, paint
3 ¼ x 3 ¼"

Odd Pair, 2010,
from the "Remains" series
wood, plastic, pigment
3 ½ x 3"

Temptation, 2007,
from the "Flashback" series
wood, plastic, pearl,
paint, press type
3 x 3"

Quigley's found-object and jewelry collections are mostly stowed out of sight, but, one feels, definitely never out of mind.

seen from space. The heavy gold settings seem totally appropriate for containing such expansive visions.

Blue hydrangeas flank the entrance to Quigley's studio in Cranston, Rhode Island, a renovated single-story frame building on a shady residential street that she shares with her husband, Richard Wessner, an independent studio craftsman who specializes in design and product development. Formerly a hair salon, with separate entrances for men and women, the building was gutted and revamped into a bright, immaculate interior space that easily accommodates the couple's separate benches and tools. Quigley's found-object and jewelry collections are mostly stowed out of sight, but, one feels, definitely never out of mind. On any given day, she might be wearing her own gold and coral earrings, an antique triple gold chain necklace adapted from one inherited from her grandmother, and a slim gold bangle made by one of her RISD students. She still relishes the stimulating environment of academia and, she says, the students' "candid quality." She has "raised a great daughter" whose opinions she values highly. The day may be coming when Quigley will return to the studio full time. In which direction that might take her is anyone's guess. In 1992, for a show in Switzerland featuring works about "the senses," Quigley caged and wrapped garlic cloves in cord without piercing or prongs to form pendant necklaces. Although she never actually followed up with a garlic collection, the concept of "holding and not harming" culminated in the design for a gold-caged heart filled with 50 karats of Indian rubies "so they were a dense mass but still free to move," she says. As she expressed in an e-mail message, "The idea for the heart pendant came from considering the word 'complicated,' and certainly the human heart is complicated." So, too, is Robin Quigley's art, and equally as vital.

Andrea DiNoto last wrote about the artist-jeweler Thomas Gentille for this magazine.

ALL PHOTOS: KAREN PHILIPPI

Furthermore:
www.robinquigley.com
www.galleryloupe.com

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1. Prip, who died in 2009 at 86, was known for modernist silverware designs for Reed and Barton, many of which are still in production.
2. See Patricia Harris and David Lyon, review of "Souvenir" exhibition, Mobilia Gallery, March 2–31, *American Craft*, 4/2004.
3. Quigley's fringe bracelets were included in the 1984 traveling exhibition "Jewelry U.S.A." at the American Craft Museum, and in the 2008 exhibition "Ornament as Art: Avant-garde Jewelry from the Helen Williams Drutt Collection" originating at at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.
4. Artist statement, "Remains," May 2010, Gallery Loupe.

Visceral Loket (open), 2010,
from the "Remains" series
gold, mixed media, vinyl,
18k gold, rubberized cord
pendant: 6 x 4 ½"

Reviews

History Repeating II: Petra Zimmermann

Ornamentum, Hudson, New York
September 4–29, 2010

by Martina Windels

The title of Austrian Petra Zimmermann's first solo show in the U.S. is taken from a song by the British band Propellerheads, written for and first performed by Shirley Bassey in 1997. In her work, Zimmermann takes a closer look at glamour, so it does not come as a surprise that she chose a song by the British diva known for her glamorous style as a title for this exhibition.

Combining existing elements of costume jewelry with an acrylic used in the manufacture of dentures, Zimmermann's recent brooches, rings, and bracelets at first glance look like joyfully overdecorated, neo-baroque metal baubles. Harnessing an apparent love of kitsch, Zimmermann collects antique costume jewelry and accessories to create her works, "resetting" the old pieces by casting them into colored plastic.

Bracelet, 2010
antique handbag (alpaca), polymethylmethacrylat, gold leaf, silver (oxidized), vintage costume jewelry
7 x 6 x 2 ⅛"

Big chunky cuff bracelets are made from clusters of dark blue navette-shaped imitation gemstones that are cast in clear or semi-translucent acrylic, underlaid with gold leaf. The incorporated parts are left in varying states of disrepair, with missing stones replaced with paint or little black pebbles. The backs, or insides, of these pieces are just as interesting, exposing the dense layers of combined materials. Other bracelets are made from sections of clear plastic tubes, with ribbons of oxidized silver arranged in bows or antique show buckles added.

The rings, with their spaceship-meets-organic aesthetic, are more colorful and expressive than the bracelets. Orange and neon-green bodies supporting amorphous tops encrusted with fake gems and gold leaf, some containing parts of an old brooch or a piece of earring, they all look like carefully considered original creations. Visually interesting, most have a flat base that enables them to stand up as a sculptural object when not being worn.

And there are brooches shaped from multicolored layers of plastic, resembling orchids, accentuated with rhinestones. Some incorporate cutouts transferred from fashion magazines, with female silhouettes harking back to earlier work by Zimmermann.

The standout pieces of the exhibition are two antique metal mesh purses converted into bracelets, both from 2010. The smaller one, with the top wide open and the bottom of the bag partially gone, is reconfigured with a lime-green plastic lining, keeping the bag permanently open and providing a hole in which to insert one's arm.

Ring, 2010
polymetylmethacrylat, silver brooch, amber, imitation gemstones, gold leaf, gold
3 ⅜ x 2 ½ x 2"

Elegant dark purple plastic reinforces what's left of the original metal mesh of the second, larger purse-cum-bracelet. Here the wrist of the wearer is intended to slide through a hole cut right into the body of the purse. Lusciously decorated with parts of vintage costume jewelry containing purple stones and black paint, this piece is a stunningly elegant contemporary interpretation of jewels to be worn to a night at the opera. Both bracelets come with the original chain handles, which provide the option to wear these objects slipped over one's arm, as was intended when they were purses. These bracelets and the rings in the exhibition are most removed from the original jewelry components used to create them, and are most convincing as original, new creations.

Behind these inventive reflections on glamour, Zimmermann's appropriation and reinterpretation, lie questions of original versus imitation. Valuable objects originally created for a limited audience are imitated and mass-produced as cheap accessories, thus devalued in the process. Reconfigured and reinterpreted, they are once again elevated and revalued, now on exhibit in a gallery to be viewed by a select group. In addition to looking at value and glamour, these works also point at expiration dates in fashion and trends, or as Shirley Bassey sings:
And I've seen it before
And I'll see it again
Just little bits of history repeating…

Martina Windels is a jeweler, former gallery owner, and writer based in Rhode Island.

Transpositions: Lisa and Scott Cylinder

Velvet da Vinci, San Francisco
August 11–September 17, 2010

by Jennifer Cross Gans

A little over two years ago, Lisa and Scott Cylinder decided to move away from their traditional jewelry style with a vengeance. For the music lovers the outcome was musical madness. The Cylinders met

and married shortly after the Tyler School of Art graduation, but a couple of decades later, when their two children became teenagers, they realized the special relationship they had with music. It's a musical family: the daughter plays the clarinet, and their son plays the trombone and a host of other instruments. Falling in love with these and other instruments, Lisa and Scott decided to join the "orchestra."

The artists obtained damaged and discarded instruments, and took them apart. Many of these were turn-of-the-century; others were made in Mexico and were well crafted, handmade, and assembled with high quality workmanship and materials. They also carried a rich history of use, tarnish, wear, repair, love, and hate. The result was called "upcycling," a quantum leap away from "recycling."

It didn't take long for the couple to decide how to best share the work. Scott employed his engineering skills, mechanics, and soldering; Lisa took charge of the decorations and refinishing. Working on two pieces at the same time, the result was a marvelous collection, especially for music appreciators.

The instruments they created were far from their original shape, and given an entirely new life. *Cherry Tree Clarinet Key Necklace*, in mixed media, hosted part of the clarinet body, but stripped away to resemble a hole-ridden tree –with a busy woodpecker attached to the side. *Seahorse Clarinet Key Brooch* is based on a single large key manipulated into an "L" shape, with spine and tail affixed to resemble a large seahorse. The *Cherry Hummer Bass Clarinet Key Brooch* features a hummingbird with an enormously long beak busily poking at what his eye sees: a red cherry, as large as he is.

Several pieces are distinctly modernist in appearance. The Picasso-like *Thoroughbred Equine Viola Brooch* has nostrils added, and existing holes opened to make silver eyes. *The Black Swan Viola Brooch* is made from an old violin scroll, with strings attached to create tension on the wing. *The Peg Eyed Violin Scroll Snail Necklace* is also made from a violin scroll, cello strings, and the eyes of the snail incorporated from tuning pegs.

The Cylinders were influenced by their love of Mexican jewelry, particularly that of William Spratling, and their studies of the pre-and post-Columbian periods. To a saxophone, they added a jaguar, a quetzal, a parrot, a snail, even a horse derived from Don Quixote. Tails, where appropriate, are moveable, and in the case of *Parrot Post Columbian Saxophone Brooch/Necklace*, convertible.

Several pieces based on the piano boast elements that can be manipulated. The *Violet Whippen Piano Brooch* employs a whippen, part of an upright piano, so that the bird's beak opens and shuts. The *Scarlet Damper Piano Brooch* is made from two piano dampers, pieces of felt which modify the sound, to facilitate the opening and closing of the lower jaw. *Hammer Butt Yes Bird Piano Brooch*, combines the hammer and butt to make the bird's head nod. A couple of these pieces are also painted in b lack and white to imitate the piano keyboard.

It takes a strong sense of engineering to make these works function. Says Lisa, "We drop the pieces on the floor and they never fall apart." The rear end of each piece has folded the findings into the design, through a series of miniature nuts and bolts. For example, the "parrot" part of the pre-Columbian necklace is as interesting from the back as the front, where two dangling feet are below with an upward track to the eye fastening. "Transpositions" carries a magical quality, which incites a sense of wonder at the ingenuity of these marvelous pieces.

Jennifer Cross Gans is a San Francisco-based jeweler and writer.

Edward Lane McCartney: Dignity and Impudence

Goldesberry Gallery, Houston
September 11–October 16, 2010

by Rebecca Elliot

The work of Houston-based artist Edward Lane McCartney covers an enormous range in style, content, form, and materials. This exhibition was no exception and encompassed jewelry, lighting, sculptural tableaux, wall pieces, and small containers, all made from materials including cable ties and fetishwear spikes as well as silver and occasionally gold. Some works were driven by formal explorations of materials, whereas others were laden with allegory and social commentary. In materials as well as content, "Dignity and Impudence" was all about contrasts and dichotomies;

Cherry Tree Clarinet Key Necklace, 2010
nickel, sterling silver, brass, vintage clarinet keys, vintage Grenadilla wood, cork
11 ½ x 3 ⅜ x ¾"

Parrot Post-Columbian Saxophone Brooch/Necklace, 2010
brass, vintage saxophone parts with residual silver plate, malachite, sterling silver, nickel silver, azurite
5 ½ x ½ x ¼"

Alchemy and Entropy, 2010
copper, brass, grind stone, glass, sterling silver, steel, rubber
25 x 6 x 6"

in addition to the title, one might add sacred and profane, precious and poor, and even purity and danger (to borrow from anthropologist Mary Douglas). Unifying these pairings, at least in some cases, was a covert theme of rituals, both personal and social.

An interesting example of such contrasts was found in *Alchemy and Entropy*, one of several sculptures concerned with politics and religion. Here alchemy stands for the desire for transcendence and purity that underlies religion, and entropy for the danger of devolution into chaos and the basest aspects of human nature. The sculpture is a scientific-looking instrument, with a simulated jeweler's torch to heat a large glass test tube filled with religious charms. On top is a pressure gauge, which bears the fictional brand name "Fundamentalist Supply Co." It runs from Alpha (blue) to Omega (red), and the needle has just entered the red zone. The instrument presents a closed system: the torch is powered by the heat of the tube's contents. Thus, *Alchemy* conveys McCartney's view of religious discourse as overheated and threatening to explode into fundamentalism, and engages one of the ideas behind the exhibition's title: the dignity of institutions like religion, and the impudence of dogma, hypocrisy, and the abuse of power.

Other works continue this theme. *Mea Maxima Culpa*, which the artist has described as a tool of self-flagellation, is a cat o' nine tails whose chains bear charms, some depicting toys and others hypothetical names and ages of children. Similarly, *Wolves in Sheep's Clothing* is a full-scale crozier with a small bishop's miter capping its crook; its shaft is ringed by photographs of children in Gothic, pointed-arched frames. Both works also incorporate the fetishwear spikes, and both clearly address the sex abuse scandal in the Catholic Church. They confront the hypocrisy of religion rather more bluntly than did *Alchemy*. However, *Mea Maxima*, *Wolves*, and *Alchemy* are all symbolic implements for use in ritualistic acts, and as such, critique the broader social effects of religion, not simply issues pertaining to specific faiths.

The sculpture *Is the Cure Worse than the Disease?* alludes to religion in order to present a ritual with both personal and social impact: the onerous and expensive medication schedules required of those with HIV. With a linen cloth and silver goblet, plate, spoon, pill bottle, and pills, the work clearly refers to the chalice, paten, and wafers used in Communion, and to the act of bodily transformation it symbolizes. The goblet, etched with drug company logos and complete with shackles, reinforces the rhetorical power of the question in the work's title.

Overall, "Dignity and Impudence" demonstrated McCartney's skill at referencing traditional forms of metalwork to comment on contemporary issues and to relate the personal to the political. However, there was also a separate thread running through the exhibition, since many works were motivated not by content but by inventive use of alternative materials. Examples included lamps with interlocking cable ties for shades (two were actually called *Dignity* and *Impudence*) and the "Bouquet" brooches, in which cable ties serve as settings for cubic zirconia stones. The exhibition thus consisted of numerous individual statements rather than one larger, cohesive one.

Rebecca Elliot is the curatorial assistant for modern and contemporary decorative arts and design at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Catherine Grisez: Lick

Traver Gallery, Seattle
July 1–30, 2010

by Matthew Kangas

Performative jewelry? Catherine Grisez's recent works belong to an esoteric category of jewelry that is meant to be photographed but cannot be safely worn (short of minor

Is the Cure Worse than the Disease?, 2007
sterling silver, fine silver, linen
6 ½ x 15 x 12"

Protector (detail on model), 2010
copper, sterling silver, hematite, pyrite, compasses
PHOTO: LUCIEN KNUTESON

surgery). Accompanied by a 55-page catalogue, with utterances by ten "creative writers," "Catherine Grisez: Lick" turns jewelry sculptures into photo vignettes, with models staged and shot by Lucien Knuteson. Every object oozes and drips from a faked orifice or wound on each of ten models (four men, six women).

None of this process was apparent in the gallery, where the display cases looked sad and lonely. If each sculpture is activated by the model, what does it do when it is isolated from the performer? Furthermore, how is one to judge or analyze such work? Not one essay or poem in the catalogue really illuminates, assists, or even interprets any of the art.

Rather, the writings are first-person narratives that riff on the photographs of the models (perhaps) or just go off in their own narcissistic direction. Necks, stomachs, navels, fingers, cheeks, breasts, and soles of feet become sites of intervention into the body, cuts from which Grisez's jewelry emerges instead of blood. Pearls, gems, precious stones, plastic, wood, and all sorts of metal wires comprise the sculptures, which, truth be told, had considerable, if confusing, beauty when seen on their own.

Nearly impossible to wear in public, these works inhabit Grisez's bizarre fantasy world. Her dependence upon the texts in the catalogue is not a good sign. The annotations not only fail to illuminate the objects in any helpful way, they are not that interesting to read. Is this a sadomasochistic jewelry ritual performed in private, or is the whole project an attempt to bolster or justify Grisez's otherwise hybrid studio practice, to sidestep critical judgment, or to share the wealth of her Artist Trust (a local private arts funding agency) grant among friends? Both models and authors are profiled in the back of the catalogue, including a "heart-based psychotherapist," "Mongolian Writers Union adviser," "general enthusiast," and several creative writing teachers.

Admirer, 2010
sterling silver, champagne quartz, wood and acrylic case
4 x 12 x 12"
PHOTO: LUCIEN KNUTESON

Protector (all works are 2010) is gruesome enough. Strands of sterling silver and copper are attached to the sole of a foot, rendering walking impossible, of course. *Admirer* sticks quartz crystals on someone's cheek and shoulder, set in sterling silver. *Vocalizer* is an oval with silver chains and stones, photographed on a rock singer's throat. *Contradictor* is like a rock-crystal umbilical cord of silver and copper chain attached to two models' navels. Short of the models, do these works really have an existence outside Grisez's conceit of performative metals? Perhaps they become (and remain) theatrical props, devoid of identity or meaning absent the model—or photographer. The idea that jewelry that cannot be worn by default becomes sculpture when exhibited in the gallery doesn't wash either.

Hiring psychotherapists, bad poets, and computer scientists who teach creative writing is a terrible idea, rendering *Lick by Catherine Grisez* (the catalogue) worthless as criticism. Grisez remains for the time embedded (or trapped) in a netherworld of performance and poetry, her works in the ungodly twilight realm of objects that are neither functional nor independent enough to become sculpture.

With everything so contingent—upon model, writer and photographer—the intricate workmanship and delicacy Grisez is capable of gets lost. While thought-provoking, this body of work remains in critical limbo, vague and indeterminate. It would be remarkable to see Grisez's next body of work, something that would be all hers alone.

Matthew Kangas, a Seattle-based critic, is working on a collection of his art reviews due out next year.

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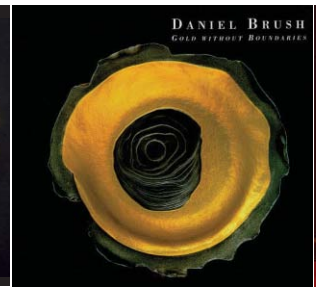
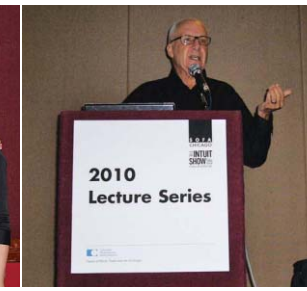
BY DANA SINGER

Choker by Mary Lee Hu, speaker at "Gold: Substance, Significance and Symbol" conference



Daniel Brush Gold without Boundaries, with photography by John Bigelow Taylor

2010 SOFA "Emerging Artists" speakers Adam Grinovich, Andrea Janosik, and Eun Yeong Jeong



Garth Clark, curator for *Metalsmith*'s 2010 *Exhibition in Print*

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Metalsmith is pleased to be a Media Sponsor of the "Gold: Substance, Significance and Symbol" event, April 7–9, 2011. This two-day conference in New York takes an all-embracing look at gold—from mineralogy, to geology, to ingots, to coinage, to jewelry—at all stages of its production and use, including the contemporary focus on sustainable and environmentally conscious extraction and the use of reclaimed metal by artists working in gold. The conference is produced by Initiatives in Art and Culture, www.artinitiatives.com.

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For the seventh year, Rio Grande, the online source for innovative jewelry-making products and technical know-how, will be the corporate sponsor of SNAG's conference, "Flux," May 26 through 29, 2011, in downtown Seattle. Hosted by the Seattle Metals Guild, the event, co-chaired by Joan Hammond and Carmen Valdes, is a not to be missed occasion, spearheaded by keynote speaker Glenn Adamson.

The Art Jewelry Forum is coordinating an exhibition for the conference, "Geography," featuring contemporary art jewelry from around the world, curated by AJF President Susan Cummins and board member Mike Holmes. This year's "Exhibition in Motion" fashion show is hosted by the Bellevue Arts Museum, with Stefano Catalani, Director of Curatorial Projects/Artistic Director.

Art Photographer John Bigelow Taylor Joins *Metalsmith*

John Bigelow Taylor who, along with his partner, Dianne Dubler, is internationally known for their photographic essays on diverse subjects, is now shooting the covers of *Metalsmith*. Among his stellar list of publications, one area of specialty is jewelry photography; Taylor was the photographer for the book *Daniel Brush, Gold without Boundaries*, for Elizabeth Taylor's collection, *My Love Affair With Jewelry* and for *The White House Collection of American Crafts*.

SNAG Sponsored Three Lectures at SOFA Chicago

SNAG sponsored three lectures as part of the 2010 SOFA Chicago Salon Series, coordinated by Donald Friedlich. Our annual "Emerging Artists" talk featured Adam Grinovich, Andrea Janosik, and Eun Yeong Jeong on the development of their respective work. "Peering over the Palace Wall: The Neo-Palatial Aesthetic in Contemporary Art" was presented by Garth Clark. Exploring contemporary twists on palatial opulence, it expanded on his curated *Exhibition in Print*. And in "A Wider World: Handmade and Fair Trade," Peggy Eng talked about her current involvement with jewelry artisans in Peru developing designs for a Western market.

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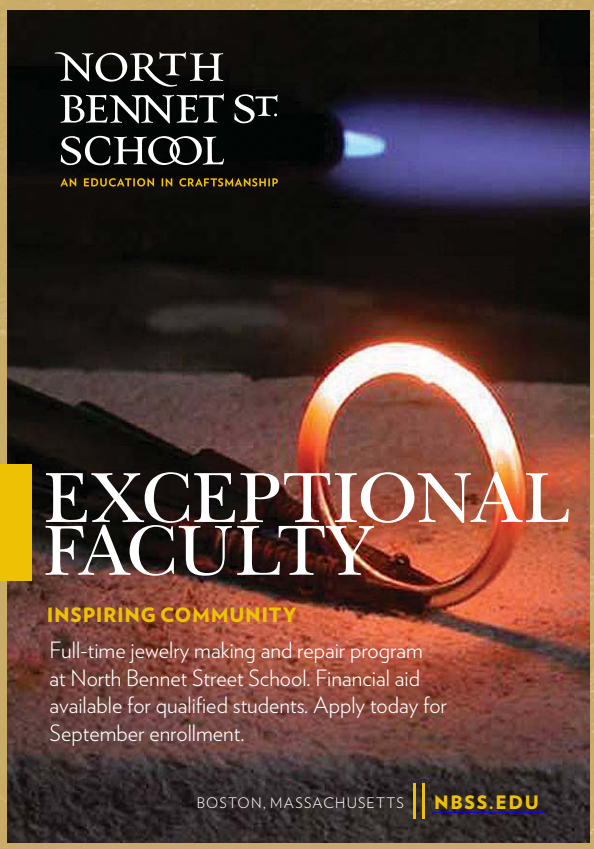

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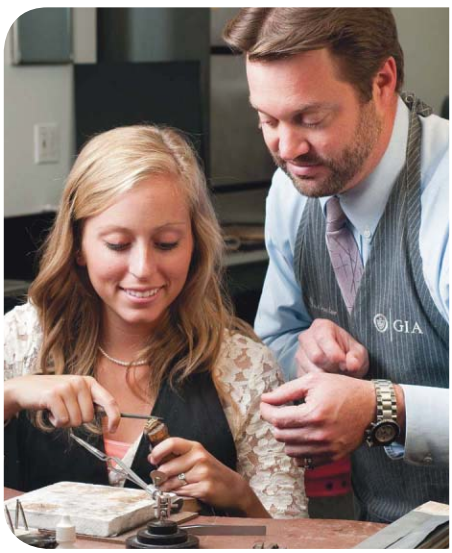

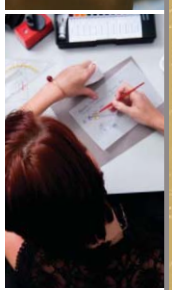

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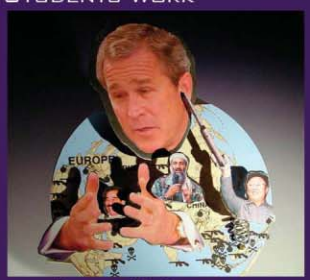

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Above: "Let's Party" by Betty Helen Longhi; photo by artist. Pendant; Sterling silver, niobium and pearls

Right: "Rivers and Canyons II" by Cynthia Eid. Sterling, 18KYG, and Rhodolite Garnets, 7" x 7" x 1" Neckpiece

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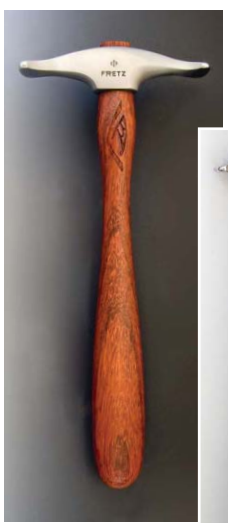

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Spiculums

by Betty Helen Longhi, Cynthia Eid, and Andrea Kennington

The straight spiculum demonstrated below.

A spiculum is a tapering tube that is formed from a single piece of sheet metal. The name is derived from the Latin, spica, which means, "to spike," and a spicule is a small spike.

There are two types of spiculums commonly made by metalsmiths. The *straight spiculum*, a tapered tube with a straight axial line, was originally developed by Heikki Seppä. The metal is furrowed in a forming block with a progression of cross-peen hammers until the cross-section of the spiculum is a U. Then the U is closed from the outside until the edges meet and the seam is soldered to prevent the metal from buckling when the spiculum is bent. The resulting object is very rigid and strong. There are no limits to size — they can range from micro-spiculums to monumental sculptures.

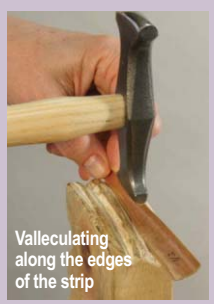
Andrea Kennington and NC Black design micro tools specifically for making micro-spiculums and micro shell forms. For pdfs of how to work with these micro tools, visit www.NCBlack.com.

The hammers and stakes shown can be purchased at Allcraft.

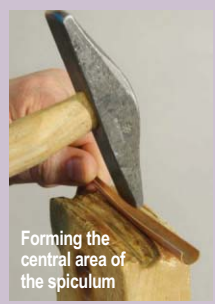
The second type of spiculum, known as an *open-seam spiculum*, is made by anticlasting a strip of metal to the desired curvature before closing it into a tube. Instead of making a tube and then bending it, this method performs both operations simultaneously. Primary development of the open-seam spiculum was done by goldsmith Michael Good. You can find Good's instructions in his article in *Metals Technic*, published by Brynmorgen Press.

The Process for Forming a Straight Spiculum

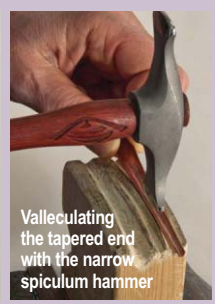
Valleculation is Heikki Seppä's name for the process of forming the spiculum blank from a flat sheet of metal to a deep U along its entire length. Using various cross peen hammers and a spiculum stake, the blank is hammered in a methodical series of courses, beginning at the edges of the metal and working towards the center-line. By selecting the size cross peen face that falls comfortably into each groove of the stake, a furrow is created and valleculation will result.



Valleculating along the edges of the strip

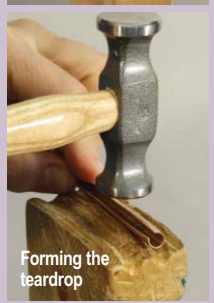


Forming the central area of the spiculum

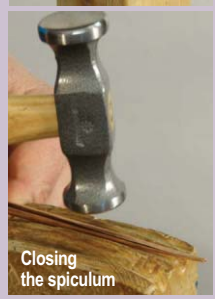


Valleculating the tapered end with the narrow spiculum hammer

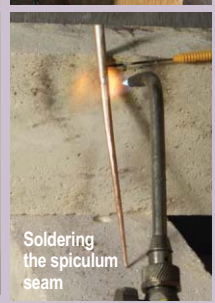
A more complete article about how to make straight spiculums can be downloaded from the artists' websites: fluidformsinmetal.com and cynthiaeid.com



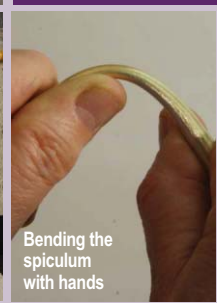
Forming the teardrop



Closing the spiculum



Soldering the spiculum seam



Bending the spiculum with hands

In order to close the form into a spiculum with a circular cross-section, the U must be taller than it is wide. Lay the furrowed blank on its side in a groove of the stake, so both open edges form a vertical plane, perpendicular to the stake. Gently hammer along the outer length of each side with a planishing hammer and the U will become taller.

Continue closing by rotating the blank in the groove so the plane between the two edges is at a 45 degree angle to the stake. Hammer gently along both edges until the cross-section of the form becomes an open tear drop.

Complete the closing by supporting the spiculum upright in a groove matching the size of the teardrop base, oriented so that you can look down the length of the spiculum seam. Tap the upper edges lightly with a planishing hammer so they come together. Work back and forth along both edges, so that the form closes evenly from both sides at the same time. Soldering the spiculum in a vertical position uses gravity to help the solder flow down the seam.

The best tool to bend the spiculum is your hands, since any mechanical devices tend to dent the surface. Support it between fingers and thumbs, pressing with the thumbs and pulling with the fingers. Due to mechanical constraints, tighter bends are more easily made at the narrower sections of the tube and there are limits as to how tightly the tube can be bent.

This article includes selected excerpts from *Shellforming Techniques for Jewelers and Metalsmiths*, a book currently in progress, written by Longhi and Eid, edited by Tim McCreight, and soon-to-be published by Brynmorgen Press.

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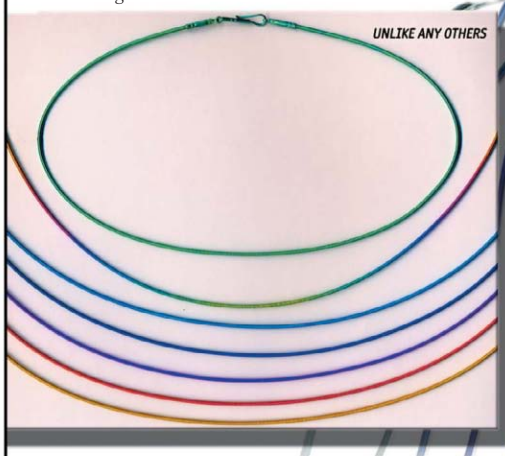

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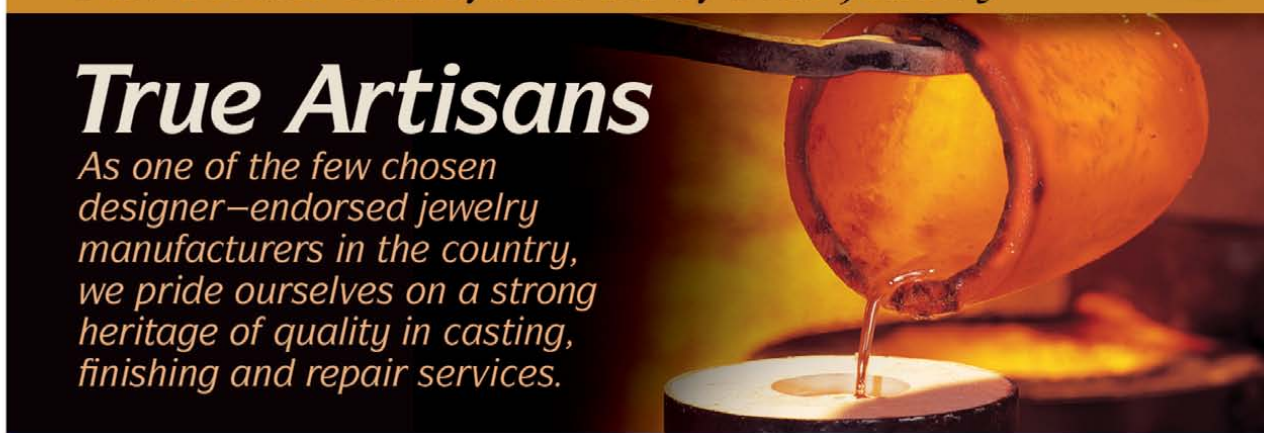

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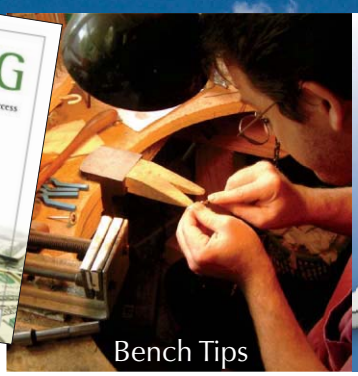

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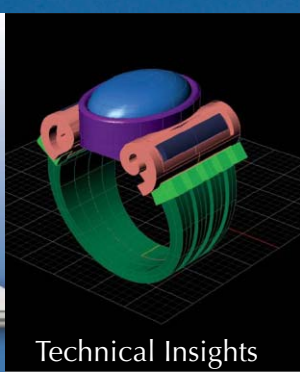

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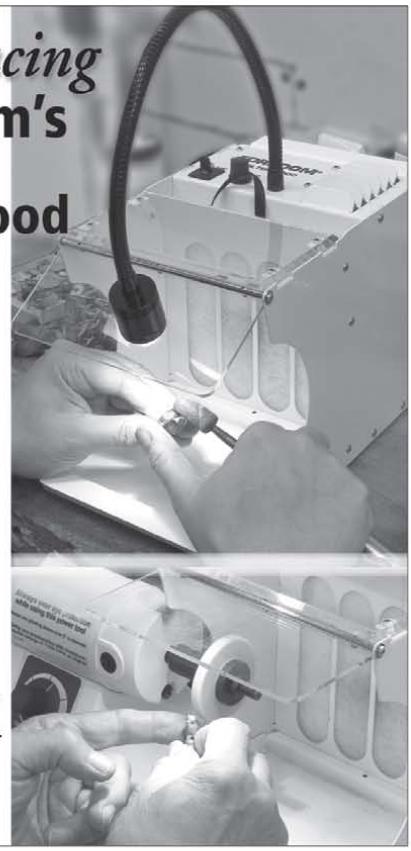

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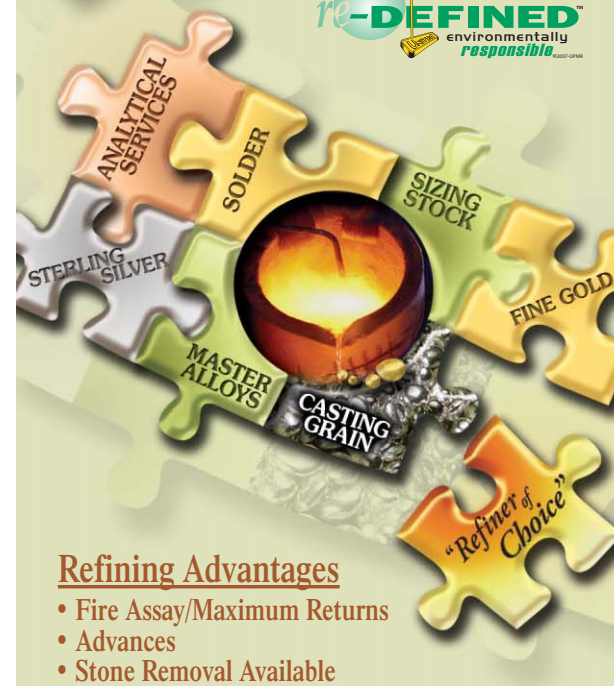

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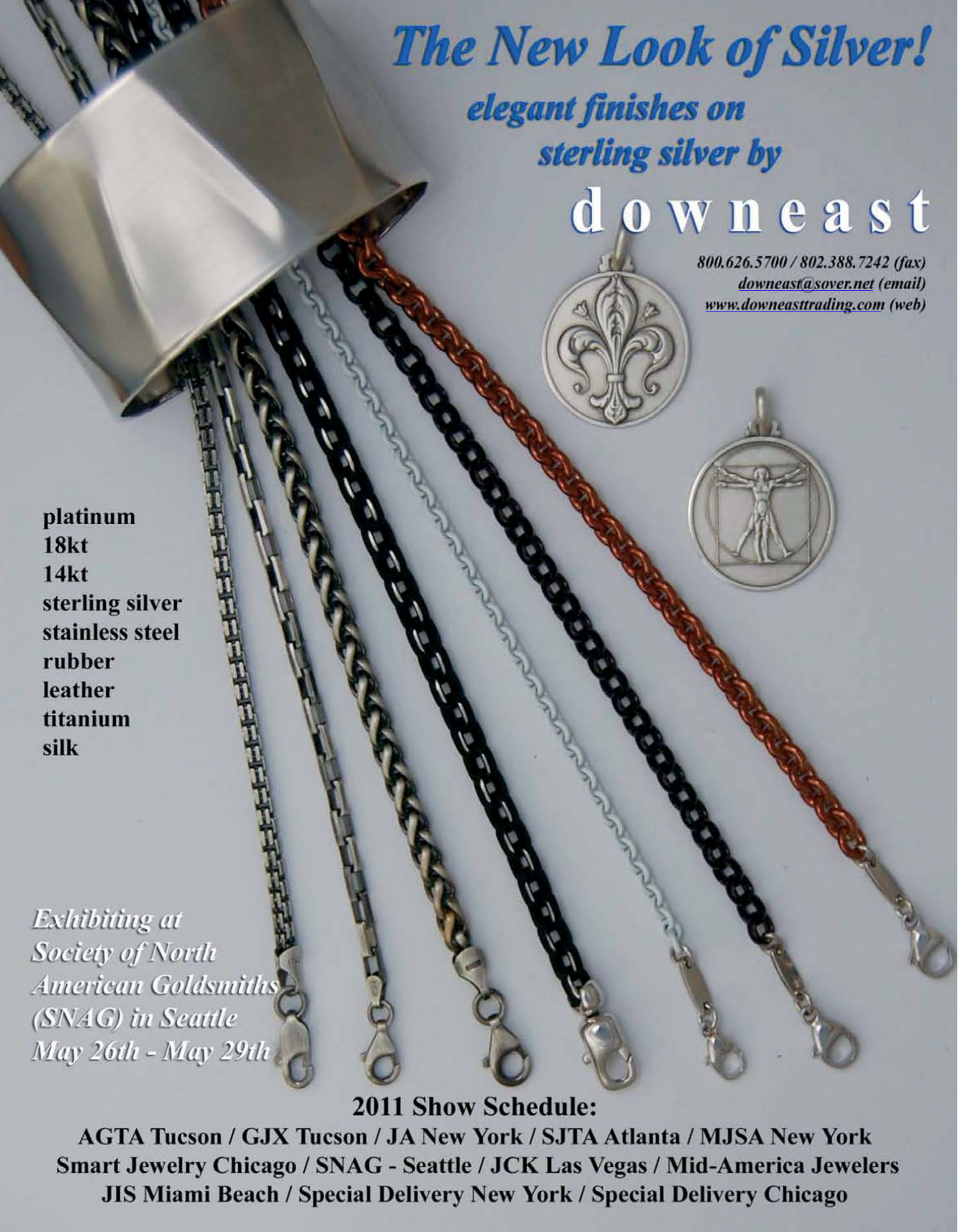

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